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VOICE OF THE TIMES

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

IN JUST A FEW WEEKS, MAKE IT AN...

Alaska vote

WHEN ALL IS SAID and done, and this election campaign is over, all of the fresh-faced and eager volunteers who have come to town will go home and chalk up their dip into Alaska politics as "a great adventure."

That was precisely the phrase used by one excited youngster, carrying the banner for Democrat Tony Knowles, as she discussed her trip here with one who answered the door when she rang the bell one evening last week.

The revealing comment should help all of us keep this election in perspective — at least as it pertains to the US Senate race between Knowles and the Republican incumbent, Sen. Lisa Murkowski. To be remembered is this:

When all of the volunteers, for whichever of the two candidates, have left Alaska after Nov. 2 and gone to wherever they came from in the Lower 48, we who reside here will live with the consequences for the next six years.

It's not whether some college sophomore from Wisconsin likes Tony — or maybe even Lisa. The question is whether we — we, the Alaska voters — like one more than the other, whether we think Lisa will continue to do a good job for us in Washington, or whether maybe we should give Tony a chance.

THIS ELECTION belongs to us — not to the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee or its counterpart on the Republican side. And it certainly doesn't belong to clipboard-toting college kids from Outside campuses trying to convince us which of these two candidates should be our senator.

They have no stake in Alaska.

They don't live here. They don't vote here. When winter comes and Alaska is still fighting for ANWR and the natural gas pipeline in the Senate, they will be long gone.

But we who stay — we who belong here because we have invested our lives in Alaska — will care.

We'll care that Sen. Murkowski continues working hand-in-glove with Sen. Ted Stevens and Rep. Don Young for those Alaska issues that are important to this state. And we'll care, should Tony win, that he tries to see aside his Democratic baggage and does his best to work with Stevens and Young to put up a unified front on Capitol Hill.

When the polls open just four weeks from now, we need to step into the voting booth remembering that this election is for our Alaska.

It's not what slick television commercials prepared by Outside advertising agencies and paid for by Outside dollars want us to believe.

We know Lisa and we know Tony. We know what their talents are and we know what they have to offer.

The choice is ours.
And ours alone.

Private sector soars into galactic frontier

By TOM BRENNAN

To those who think private space flight like that achieved by SpaceShipOne is just an expensive hobby for the rich, I have just three words: Get over it.

Sure, the initial flights will carry tourists who want a thrill and a great view and have a spare \$100,000 to blow on a few minutes of weightlessness. For those who don't want to die their weight away, it might just be worthwhile.

The public's reaction after the Wright brothers first took to the air at Kitty Hawk was similar. Many assumed flight would be just a way to entertain those with money to burn and would have little practical application. Instead, aircraft have transformed our world, both for good and ill.

The space ship's real value will almost certainly be the ultimate privatization of a largely unnecessary government program. Don't get me wrong, spending money on space research and travel is necessary. And we do need satellites for communications, weather observation, research and spy work.

NASA's accomplishments and its contributions to the nation's greater good are many. The agency performed a role that would have been unthinkable for the private sector in years past.

But the time has come to start phasing government out of the space exploration field and turn the job over to the private sector. That will take years, perhaps many years, but it's time to recognize that privatization will increase efficiency and could take political considerations out of space missions.

NASA did a fine job of getting man to the moon in the 1960s, only a government agency could have accomplished such a feat in those days. NASA won the moon race with money it took out of American pockets. And don't kid yourself — which paid part of the bill — didn't belong to anyone. It did and many of those



Brennan



individuals whose money was spent are no richer than the average person. There were, of course, many people who thought the race to the moon meant that whoever won would own the planet. Fortunately, things didn't work out that way. If the United States government did something wind up owning the moon, imagine what Congress would be doing to protect that turf.

Unfortunately, the moon race was followed by construction of the International Space Station, which seemed even at the time to be a bureaucratic idea of how to build a platform to orbit the earth. And that is the way it's working out.

The station is mutually useful, it provided a cooperative project that the United States could try with its Cold War adversary, Russia. And it's providing information on what it will take to live and work in space for extended periods. But it hasn't had a visit from the U.S. space shuttle in almost two years because of an accident that killed seven astronauts.

By contrast, SpaceShipOne pilot Michael Meivall experienced 29 rapid rolls near the top of his ascent last week. So the second team put the astronaut for the moon race with money it took out of American pockets. And don't kid yourself — which paid part of the bill — didn't belong to anyone. It did and many of those

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

Wednesday, October 6, 2004 **B-7**

MAT-SU GAS BATTLE TOOK ...

Strange turns

THE DECISION by Pioneer Natural Resources to give back 235,500 acres of coal bed gas leases in the Mat-Su Borough ended a series of contentious disputes that took unlikely turns.

The battles drove state Sen. Scott Ogan out of office rather than face a recall election. And one of the valley residents opposing development of the coal bed leases was Tom Marshall, the state's chief petroleum geologist at the time Alaska selected the area around Prudhoe Bay as part of its statehood land allotment.

Ogan found himself in what some constituents considered a conflict of interest situation because he represented them while consulting for Evergreen Resources Inc., a company they were battling over gas leasing issues.

Evergreen merged with Pioneer in late September. Pioneer inherited the Mat-Su leases and decided to give them up to concentrate on other exploration priorities in Alaska and elsewhere.

Marshall was an unlikely opponent of oil or gas operations, but the coal bed gas leases were threatening the peace and quiet of a homestead he staked out more than four decades ago.

FEW PEOPLE have had a greater positive impact on oil and gas development in Alaska than Marshall. The recommendation on Prudhoe Bay by Marshall and his staff resulted in a fateful decision that made Alaska the property owner for the big North Slope discovery, which made it eligible for billions in oil royalties in addition to production tax revenues and more.

Pioneer Resources' decision to walk away from the coal bed methane leases resolved the disputes for the time being. But it was disappointing in that coal bed gas development in Mat-Su — if done with appropriate safeguards to protect the interests of residents — could be an important source of jobs, economic development and clean fuel for Southcentral Alaska.

Industrial development near a residential area can involve conflicts over such things as access, noise, dust and heavy equipment operations. And peaceful neighborhoods require that such things be minimized or shielded by greenbelts.

But restrictions can easily drive up operations costs to the point where the leases are money-losers for the investors. Pioneer considered its prospects there to be marginally economic and not worth the heartburn their development would bring.

Pioneer retains its interest in 48,000 acres near Big Lake and is an active explorer on the North Slope. Last year, the company discovered what it considers potentially commercial quantities of oil in shallow offshore waters near the Kuparuk River. It is also a partner with Conoco-Phillips on 23,000 acres adjacent to its Arctic discovery.

With those and other priorities going for it, the company opted to be a good neighbor and drop its marginal Mat-Su properties.

At the very least, a safe place to grow

By ELISE PATKOTAK

Someone recently asked me if I felt that the work I do as a guardian ad litem actually "saved" any children. I asked them to define "saved."

They responded that they would define it as taking children out of a bad situation and returning them to a healthy one, either with their healed family or a new family. Then they added, "And these kids grow up OK and become productive, healthy members of society."

They had me nodding yes until we got to that last part. Children in state custody often don't arrive there until an awful lot of damage has been done to them. Sometimes this damage started before they were even born, with mom drinking during her pregnancy.

Of course the problem is exacerbated by substance abuse and domestic violence during their youngest, and most important years — years when the ability to trust and love and have healthy future relationships is either created or lost, cannot be "re-gained."

So my response to the question of whether I feel that I've actually helped "save" any kids is yes, but within this limited context, I feel my work has helped take children out of unsafe, often abusive and violent situations, and gotten them into a place where they can grow up safely. What happens after that is pretty much anyone's guess.

Patkotak

Sometimes these kids already have been so damaged that they immediately revert to the world they first knew and have drunken, often violent, lives. Sometimes they get in trouble one time and that's enough for them to figure out that they don't want to repeat the mistakes of their past. Sometimes they go from the state social services or juvenile justice system straight to the adult penal system with barely a break from one to the other. And sometimes, despite all odds, they turn out just fine.

If continuing to work as a guardian ad



litem was contingent on creating productive adults out of damaged kids. I would have given up a long time ago. Sometimes for me is knowing that while they are kids, they have someone safe to sleep at night, food on the table at meal times and older adults who care where they are and how they are spending their childhood.

This can be hard for a layperson to understand. Most people want a better return on their tax dollar. They want to know that money spent on social services programs will have some really positive outcome when the truth is that keeping children safe is often the best outcome we can hope for. A child with signs of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and a low IQ who experienced sexual abuse and domestic violence before he or she was 5 years old, is not someone that the best of the world can always fix.

That doesn't mean we don't keep trying. And it doesn't mean as a society we should not be responsible for giving these children a safe place to be children. But it does mean understanding the limits of what you can do with a child who starts out with so many strikes against them.

Most Alaskans have heard about a recent case in Wasilla where children taken from a home in which substance

abuse was apparently a problem were adopted by the state into a home in which physical torture and abuse seemed to be the norm. One of the reasons this case has struck such a chord with me is that it violates the minimum standard I feel we owe these children — a safe place in which to grow.

If anyone thinks these children have much of a chance at a "normal" life in the future, they are sadly mistaken. These kids have no idea what normal is. Maybe, with lots of love and determined effort, they can achieve some quality of life in the future. Maybe not. But by taking them from one troublesome situation and placing them in another, the state has condemned these children to a life of emotional and spiritual pain that they may not ever be able to overcome.

The one thing the state owed these kids when it got involved in their lives was a safe place to grow up. They didn't get that. We will all be paying the price for that mistake for years to come. But the greatest price of all has been and will continue to be paid by these children.

Elise Patkotak, an Anchorage free-lance writer and author of *Parallel Logic*, a humorous look back at her 28 years in Barrow, lives in Anchorage and owns Precious Cargo Ltd., a writing/graphics company.

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BILL J. ALLEN
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TWO JUDGES GET SPECIAL...

Judicial pass

THE LAW COULD not be more specific and clear. But two state court judges ignored the law and missed the deadline for filing for a place on the November election ballot. So what did they do? They sued the state, saying they should be on the ballot regardless of the undisputed fact that they failed to comply with the most basic and simple rules. Another judge ordered the Division of Elections to put them on the ballot anyway pending final rulings in the law-suits.

So much for specific deadlines. So much for plain-English laws. The case involves Superior Court Judge Michael I. Jeffery of Barrow and District Court Judge Nancy J. Nolan of Anchorage. They, like all Alaska judges, were appointed by the governor and must in ensuring years appear on the ballot to retain their jobs.

They don't really face an election, because they are not pitted against another candidate for the bench. But when Superior Court judges appear on the ballot, voters are asked whether they should be retained for another six years. In the case of District Court judges, it's a four-year extension.

JUDGE JEFFERY and Judge Nolan, like other judges whose names also are on this year's ballot, were required to file a declaration of candidacy no later than Aug. 1. Neither did so. In fact, they didn't file for more than two weeks after the deadline.

The Division of Elections, which earlier had sent them some stern reminders of the deadline, told the two judges, in effect, "Sorry. You missed the deadline. You're out."

Again, the law is specific. The office of a Superior Court judge and a District Court judge become vacant 90 days after an election at which there has been a failure to file a declaration of candidacy.

Well, as it turns out, not in the case of Judge Jeffery and Judge Nolan.

They asked for a stay of the state's bid to set aside their ability to stand for office, and in a ruling from the bench Superior Court Judge William F. Morse granted a temporary restraining order and told the Division of Elections to put the names of the two tardy judges on the ballot.

Not giving them a chance to keep their judicial seats, the court held, might cause them irreparable harm. And maybe, the court suggested, they will lose at the polls anyway, which would make the whole case moot.

Good grief

Talk about special treatment for two judges who simply didn't do what they should have done in a timely matter. Maybe the voters, indeed, will make the question moot — by saying no to their bids to stay on the bench.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Kerry's war positions don't add up

By CHARLES KRAITHAMMER

It was a major mistake for John Kerry to spend four days at the Democratic convention establishing his connection to Vietnam.

But it was equally appropriate. More than any other politician of our time — including John McCain, who spent five and a half years in a Vietnam prison camp rather than four and a half months on a Swift boat — Kerry has been haunted and shaped by Vietnam.

Kerry in turn has been one of the most important shapers of the meaning of Vietnam for the rest of the country. Over the course of his three decades in public life, he has presented Vietnam in three different ways.

First, the one that electrified the nation and made him famous was Vietnam as moral outrage, a crime, a place where U.S. soldiers "with the full awareness of officers at all levels of command" acted like "the armies of Genghis Khan." That was Kerry in his antiwar phase, testifying before Congress in 1971.

Second, Vietnam as a strategic error, a quagmire stumbled into by a well-meaning nation. That was Kerry for the next 30 years in a now-famous Senate speech denouncing U.S. support for the Nguyen-Vietnam war, which he cited his own searing experiences in Vietnam (and Cambodia, he claimed) as an object lesson in not intervening abroad.

Third, presented to the nation at this year's Democratic convention, Vietnam as field of glory. Hence the flourish and fanfare for the Swift boat vets, the hope of featuring war-torn heroes, culminating in "John John Kerry, and I'm reporting for duty."

Unfortunately for Kerry, field of glory does not work in a place he himself once proclaimed the scene of a crime. There is simply no escaping the dissonance of glorying in a military service of which Kerry said, as he concluded his 1971 statement to Congress, "We wish that a merciful God could wipe away our own memories of that service."

Yet Kerry's convention strategy was perfectly understandable. He would use Vietnam to establish his credentials as a credible commander in chief. Having not distinguished himself in any way on



IF TV REPORTERS COULDN'T GET FIRE LIKE THEY COVER HURRICANES

national security in his 20 years in Congress — a deficiency Hillary Clinton shares and which she is actually addressing by establishing herself as a rather hawkish member of the Senate Armed Services Committee — he fell back on his Vietnam heroism to cross the minimal threshold required in any wartime election. Cross the threshold, it did not work. He miscalculated the overriding salience of the Iraq war. It took him two months — and sinking polls — to realize that this election will be won or lost on national security. On Sept. 20, Kerry finally swung his campaign back to Iraq and the war on terrorism. But character is destiny. Kerry fell back to talking about the current war in the only way he knows — in terms of Vietnam.

He does not say "Vietnam" explicitly. But this new, aggressive Iraq stance has one unmistakable theme: wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time. Vietnam — not as crime, not as glory but as terrible strategic mistake. But where does Kerry go from there? He now gets an exceedingly rare historical second chance. Vietnam II, getting it right this time. What, then, is he offering as a solution? He will begin withdrawing troops by next summer and get us out by the end of his first term. But that makes no sense. Why wait four years? If it is a quagmire, then one

Charles Krauthammer writes a weekly, nationally syndicated column for the Washington Post. His column is distributed by the Washington Post Writers Group. Copyright 2003 The Washington Post Co.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. YOSIN
Senior Editor

ALASKA STRIVES TO OVERCOME...

Fear factor

WATCH FOR an upcoming report card on how well the state is doing in overcoming the "fear factor" that keeps many oil and gas companies from investing in Alaska.

Petroleum Newspapers of Alaska is working on an analysis of how well the state is doing in overcoming the problems described earlier this year by Mark Myers, director of the Alaska Division of Oil and Gas. It will be published in a guidebook due off the presses early next year.

Myers said the fear factor includes problems — some real, some mostly perceived — such as difficult, lengthy and uncertain permitting processes, lack of access to high-potential areas, lack of access to well and seismic data, high drilling costs, a difficult work environment, lack of access to equipment and production facilities, and long distances and high transportation costs to market.

Myers is frustrated by the deterrent impact of the Alaska fear factor. After all, our state is believed to have more undiscovered oil and gas than any other American or Canadian oil province. Yet only a small portion of the world's oil and gas companies have been involved in exploration, development and production of petroleum resources here.

Making headway on the solvable problems is and should be one of the state's highest priorities.

New sea cadets

AT A DINNER scheduled at the Millennium Hotel on Oct. 19, a new Sea Cadet unit will be officially formed — becoming the third in the city.

But this one, which offers youngsters a chance to become acquainted with Navy customs and traditions, is a bit different. Its members will be in the 11-13 age group. The existing units, at Chugach and Service high schools, have members between the ages of 13 and 19.

The local chapter of the Navy League of the United States sponsors these groups, and this newest addition to the lineup offers something special. It is being named for the late Pvt. 1 C Jesse Halling, who was killed in action in Iraq on June 7, 2003. A native of Indianapolis, Halling was a Sea Cadet before he entered active military duty — and is the only former Sea Cadet known to have died in the Iraqi war.

His mother, Pam Halling of Phoenix, Ariz., will be here for the ceremony at which her son will be honored.

The \$20-a-person dinner will begin at 6:30 p.m. The public is invited, and reservations can be made by calling Navy League members Shannon Jones at 336-1841, or Joe Zimmerman at 279-0543.

Property rights becoming less protected

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

Last week, Washington Post columnist George Will penned a column "Despotism in New London" (Sept. 19, 2004). In it, he described how Connecticut's Supreme Court, by a 4-to-3 ruling, allowed the New London Development Corp. to use laws of eminent domain to condemn much of the city's Fort Trumbull neighborhood, near a \$270 million Pfizer research facility, and lease it to luxury hotel, condominium and office building developers New London, Conn., as hard up for tax revenues, and if the property is taken away from middle-class homeowners and transferred to wealthy interests, it will yield the city more tax revenue.

The Fifth Amendment is very clear about takings. It says, in part, "nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation." The key phrase is public use. Public use means uses such as roads, bridges, military installations and public buildings. The Connecticut Supreme Court held that the only requirement for the taking of private property is that there be some public benefit. With that kind of reasoning, no one's private property is safe because Williams' is a public use.



What's a public use? This kind of despotism is the John A. Rapano, a 66-year-old Michigan landowner faces a 10-month federal imprisonment and up to \$10 million in fines. Rapano cleared and graded 175 acres of fallow farmland that he had owned since 1960 with the intention of constructing a shopping center. When the shopping center deal fell through, he leased the land to a local grain farmer.

Under the Clean Water Act, no person may discharge, dredge or put fill material into the navigable waters of the United States without a permit. The closest navigable waters to Rapano's land are in Saginaw Bay, some 20 miles away.

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sway. Rapano's crime in the eyes of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was that he filled in depressions on his land without permission.

According to his defense at the California-based Pacific Legal Foundation, the Corps has argued that isolated ponds and puddles were magically transformed into navigable waters, and subject to regulations, merely by the Corps' reasoning, you could go to jail if you had a tree stump ground out and filled the hole.

In the early stages of Rapano's case, U.S. District Judge Lawrence Zeigler — noting that a drug dealer had been before him that day — said rebelliously, "Here we have a person who commits crimes of selling dope, and the government asks me to put him in prison for 10 months. And then we have an American citizen, who buys land, pays for it with his own money, and he moves said farm one end to the other, and the government wants me to give him 63 months in prison. Now if that sort of system game crazy, I don't know what is And I am not going to do it."

Rapano's sentencing has been delayed because the constitutionality of

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
 Senior Editor

KNOWLES SHOULD ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT...

Drug imports

THERE ARE A FEW questions U.S. Senate hopeful **Ray Knowles** should answer about his support for a drug importation bill sponsored by his campaign director's boss.

Knowles, running against incumbent Republican Sen. Lisa Murkowski, is working to make a key part of his campaign his support for the importation bill offered by Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D. Jim Messina, Dorgan's chief of staff, coincidentally was sent here to help Knowles defeat Murkowski.

The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner this week published an article by Sam Bishop of its Washington, D.C., bureau on the complicated issue of importing drugs from Canada. It should be required reading.

In it, Knowles says, "All we know is they (Canada) have a product that is half the price. Why is it against the law for us to buy it?"

In saying that, he ignores the assessment of the Congressional Budget Office and others that drug imports are unlikely to decrease prices. He also ignores the issues of drug patents in the \$216 billion U.S. drug market — not to mention such things as drug safety, counterfeit, secure countries of origin and the future of drug research in this nation.

Those issues are all too real. This week alone, overworked federal agents seized 439 packages of prescription drugs presumably made in Canada. They were not All, in fact, had been subject to Canadian recall, officials said.

THERE IS more Canada, unable to import enough drugs from the United States to feed the demand for export to this nation, is importing from other countries — and sending some of those drugs here.

In a special report on the importation issue, U.S. News and World Report says "Drug imports to Canada increased 22 percent in the first eight months of 2003, including some from countries like Iran and Ecuador, where Canada has no agreement that the country's drug makers will abide by good manufacturing practices."

The news magazine went on to say: "In one of the largest mail facilities, in one week, customs collected 16 large bins of about 3,000 packages suspected to contain counterfeit or unapproved drugs for the FDA to inspect."

Murkowski supports a measure by Sen. Judd Gregg, R-N.H., saying it better protects Americans. "I'm not interested in getting the price down so that it is affordable or cheaper if it isn't what the doctor has prescribed," she said in the News-Miner article.

The News-Miner says Knowles "declined to delve into the price debate when interviewed." It added:

"Asked if opening the United States to Canadian drugs might be a de facto adoption of the country's price controls, Knowles laughed and said, 'I don't know. Would the drug companies try to cut off Canada?' I don't worry about that."

Too bad he doesn't know and isn't worried. Those questions are worth answers.

Avoid bunnies on Flat Rabbit Road

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

IN THE CONTINUING process of tracking down offbeat street names here and there and everywhere, comes now John Connor with one from the Fairbanks area, Flat Rabbit Road. He says it's off Steese Creek Road, just north of the Chena Hot Springs Road junction on the Steese Highway. It also can be reached, he says, off the Chena Hot Springs Road about mile 3.5 Road, anyone?

LAST CALL: The Anchorage Symphony is holding auditions tonight for openings in its strings section — violin 1 and 2 and viola. If you haven't already registered, you're in trouble — because the auditions are scheduled from 7-10 p.m. in the Aword Concert Hall in the Performing Arts Center.

There's still time to sign up, however, if you're a horn player or looking for a spot in the symphony.

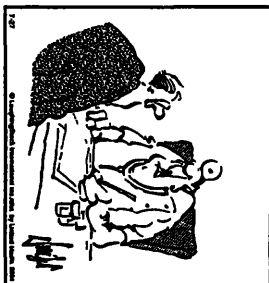
Musical Director Randall Chang Fleischer and his audition committee are looking for a 2nd trombone, a 3rd 2nd horn and a 3rd trumpet — and will be checking those out on Tuesday between 6-10 p.m., likewise in the same place in the PAC.

ON OTHER MUSICAL matters, violinist Heidi Senningschuk of Homer and pianist Juliana Gomburuk will combine their artistry in a performance of Maurice Ravel's Sonatas for Violin and Piano at the Anchorage Festival of Music at Fall State Concert this evening at 7 o'clock at the Marlin, the home of the late Bob Alwood. It's just off Forest Park Drive and Hillcrest. Admission is \$35 a person. The program also will include works by Schubert, Dvorak and Messiaen. Heidi regularly performs with the Anchorage Symphony and Juliana, an almost everyone knows, is Anchorage's gift to the international concert stage and director of the series series.

ALSO ON YOUR calendars, make a note that the Coast Guard Foundation's annual benefit banquet is scheduled this Thursday at 6:30 p.m. at the



"I'm putting you down as 'potential donor material.'"



Hotel Gayman Cook. Sean Kruse, president of Highland America Lane, will serve as host for the \$100-a-person affair.

This Friday, you can join the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce's annual "Get on Board" train ride from the Anchorage Railroad Depot to Indian and back, leaving at 11:15 a.m. and returning at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. It's a \$30 journey, with food and drinks included. It's billed as a "Wild, Wild West" affair.

Tickets are available at the chamber of commerce. On the meeting front, the 46th annual convention of the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce will be staged at Juneau Oct. 19-21, with a host of economic and business topics on the agenda. This year's theme: "Meet the Faces Behind Alaska Business."

Here at home, the Alaska Miners Association's annual convention and trade show will be held the first week of November at the Sheraton Anchorage, with a fascinating theme for a political year: "Alaska — Where You Can Still Permit and Build a Mine." Every year, the convention brings together some of Alaska's most fascinating people, young and old — including some who have mined over most of the state's vast acreage, pick and shovel in hand, looking for the next big mineral discovery.

AND FOR THE first time, the Western Alaska Council of the Boy Scouts of America is dipping the toes in the big fund-raising activity known as an auction. What the scouts describe as

their "first annual auction" will be held Saturday, Nov. 6, at the Sheraton, with all proceeds going to the most worthy purpose of supporting Boy Scout programs in this area. The fun, at "A Night of Alaskan Scouting Adventure," will begin at 6:30 p.m.

ZOOLOGY LESSON: The male musk ox at the Alaska Zoo was born on the day that former President Ronald Reagan died. In honor of the late president, the calf was named "Tipper." The name comes from the role Reagan played as a Notre Dame football player whose death-bed wish to coach Knute Rockne was that someone the team would be asked to "win one for the Gipper."

Elvis and Priscilla, the Alaska Zoo's Tibetan yak, had a little one on Aug. 26 and she has been given the name Bliley. The zoo veterinarian is Ray Wilson — but the zoo deems the new yak is named after the 15-year-old granddaughter of Elvis Presley, who, by the way, during her lifetime never to anyone's knowledge ever visited the Alaska Zoo. Well, you have to name them something.

IN GOOD COMPANY: As you may have noticed, the feds have designated Anchorage as a strategic seaport — meaning it officially will be a place to handle Defense Department cargo during times of national or international crisis. We're one of 16 ports on this select category of ports. The others are Oakland, Long Beach, San Diego, Corpus Christi, Beaumont, Wilmington, Morehead City, Tacoma, Jacksonville, Savannah, Charleston, Philadelphia, Hampton Roads, and the New York and New Jersey port complex. Anchorage is one of America's 361 deep water seaports, in case you've been wondering how many there are.

SUNDAY PUNDAY: Pete and Charlie were enjoying burgers at the White Spot Café when Pete told his buddy, "A lawyer's chasing me." "What's the deal?" asked Charlie. Answered Pete. "He says if I don't pay the bill my exorcist sent me, he'll have me repossessed."

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

ELECTION RESULTS COULD AFFECT SYRIA'S ...

New attitude

DONT EXPECT John Kerry to acknowledge it, but by bringing down Saddam Hussein, the George Bush White House has significantly improved political stability in the Middle East.

The cost has been high, both in lives and dollars, but the results could well be worth the pain and effort. Besides freeing 25 million Iraqis from tyranny — after destroying terrorist camps in Afghanistan — the White House has also pushed Syria into a more positive attitude.

There is still plenty to worry about in the region, especially in Syria, but the Damascus government has begun pulling its troops back from their bases in Lebanon to positions nearer their own border. The Syrian soldiers have started evacuating hilltop positions above five towns south of Beirut.

Secretary of State Colin Powell said the redeployment involved about 3,000 troops. Another 17,000 Syrian military remain positioned deep within Lebanon, so the limited withdrawal is not a definitive move in a positive direction. But some top analysts say it's a signal from Syria to the United States and Israel that it is ready to do business.

The move came just as word was released that the Bush administration is drafting contingency plans to bring military and economic pressure against the regime of Syrian President Bashar Assad.

ASSAD'S REGIME is known to be harboring senior terrorist operatives who are fomenting problems in Iraq. And the Middle East Newsline reports that the U.S. military has concluded that Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction were transferred out of Iraq by way of Syria in 2002-2003. They were undoubtedly moved to avoid detection by United Nations inspectors then trying to track them in Iraq.

Powell told the editorial board of *The New York Times* that he met with the Syrian government earlier this month and the two sides discussed ways to exchange intelligence and cut down on support from within Syria to the Iraqi insurgents.

The Syrians undoubtedly will drive a hard bargain for further improvement in their posture, possibly offering terms that would be unacceptable to Israel, but the partial withdrawal is an encouraging step away from their country's previous confrontational stance.

Murderous insurgents still battle against allied troops in Iraq. Many analysts say they are trying to inflict casualties with an eye to the American elections coming Nov. 2.

They want a change in U.S. leadership and direction. Let's hope this country doesn't give it to them. The future of our own nation and many more — and of millions of people in the Middle East — depend on a wise decision on election day.

State leads Southeast development

By LEW M. WILLIAMS, JR.

Gov. Frank Murkowski predicted a bright future for Southeast Alaska when he keynoteed the Southeast Conference meeting in Sitka. That future lies in use of natural resources — minerals, seafood and timber, plus an increase in the visitor business — all benefiting from new roads, ferries and power development.

His major road projects are a road up Brindfield Canal from Wrangell and Ketchikan to the Canadian highway system, a road across Barnard Island to give Sitka a shorter and cheaper ferry route north and south, a road from Juneau to Skagway, and a road to Kake. Improved transportation also benefits the fishing business by enabling fresh seafood to get to markets quicker and at a better price for fishermen and processors.

Pushing the Southeast hydro power grid is in line with the drive in other states toward developing renewable energy sources. The Wall Street Journal reported "Governments from California to Maine are pursuing policies that call for greater use of alternative energy generated by harnessing the wind, sun, water and other renewable sources."

Of course, Alaskans want to market their oil and gas, whose high prices are driving the push for renewable energy. Alaska has huge coal reserves. Federal geologists claim that one-half of the nation's coal reserves are in Alaska and 80 percent of that low-sulfur coal lies in the 23 million-acre National Petroleum Reserve. Even with hybrid vehicles and renewable energy, there always will be a demand for coal, oil and gas to produce plastics and products ranging from steel to sugar substitutes.

The governor predicts "a bustling shipyard at Ketchikan with the capability to handle multiple ships, providing repair and construction services and an anchorage bridge carrying freight, travel."

The governor predicts "a bustling shipyard at Ketchikan with the capability to handle multiple ships, providing repair and construction services and an anchorage bridge carrying freight, travel."



Williams



elers and commuters between Ketchikan and its growing airport. The Department of Transportation announced Sept. 15 the release of the record of decision for the bridge to Gravina Island. Little known in Ketchikan is the state's push for what DOT calls the Revilla Road. It connects the Ketchikan's road system to the northeast side of Revilla Island facing Bell Island. The Revilla Road will be constructed over existing logging roads, over new roads financed by logging and with some DOT industrial road money.

A short ferry ride to Cleveland Peninsula leads to a feasible road route to the Canadian border. The Murkowski administration is negotiating now with British Columbia officials for their portion of the connection from the border to B.C. Highway 37.

Although Canadian environmentalists and Stewart and Prince Rupert longshoremen oppose the road, leaving port competition, preliminary studies indicate that for every job created in Alaska by the Brindfield Road and a power line, 15 jobs will be created in Canada. Alaska Congressman Don Young has \$3 million earmarked in the federal transportation bill to pay for the environmental impact statement for the Brindfield Road, in addition to the money for the Gravina Bridge and the Kake

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BILL J. ALLEN
Editor

BOOSTING CIGARETTE TAX INCREASES ...

Crime risk

CROOKS GO where the money is. And since there is money to be made in smuggling of untaxed cigarettes, it should surprise nobody if Alaska's criminal element goes for the gold.

The municipality of Anchorage is raising the stakes in the fight against tobacco smugglers by boosting its tax on smokes by a dollar a pack.

The tax hike will almost certainly increase the volume of illegal cigarette sales. Some will buy cheaper smokes in Met-Su or on the Kenai Peninsula. Others will buy them on the Internet, where they are shipped to you virtually tax-free. Buyers in such situations are supposed to pay state and local taxes themselves, but nobody ever does.

One of those who eyes the Anchorage tax boost with trepidation is the state's only tobacco enforcement field agent, Charles King, an Anchorage-based employee of the Alaska Department of Revenue. He worries that such a large difference in taxes is an invitation to criminal activity.

KING'S SITUATION is unique. Under state policy he is not a commissioned officer, though he would easily qualify by going through a brief recertification process. He is a retired Coast Guard special agent who fought narcotics smugglers and organized crime during his military career. He also worked as a special commissioned officer for the Alaska State Troopers' narcotics unit in Juneau and as an immigration inspector.

Without being a commissioned officer, King's instructions when conducting inspections and seizing contraband tobacco are to call 911 if he needs assistance from an armed officer. That, of course, is problematic when the situation develops in one of the state's remote areas. Revenue has thoughtfully furnished him with body armor.

King admits he is also unable to obtain or serve search warrants for records that could indicate where smuggled tobacco came from. Without those, it is impossible to determine how much tax is owed or what penalties should be imposed.

The last Legislature approved six new employees for the enforcement office, including two additional investigators. But the positions were not funded and can't be filled without money for salaries and expenses.

The stakes are huge. Tobacco taxes are the state's second-largest revenue stream next to oil taxes and royalties. Last fiscal year, the state garnered \$40 million from tobacco.

Admittedly there are differences of opinion about the risk of overt criminal activity here other than small-time smuggling. But the state of Alaska and the municipality of Anchorage seem to have their heads stuck firmly in the sand on this one.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Friday, October 1, 2004 **B-9**

Voter turnout depends upon candidates

By WILLIAM LANGE

Oh, for the good old days when the blanket primary system ensured strong voter turnout. At least that is what we're told by the opponents of the Republican Party's decision to exercise its First Amendment right to not have its political opponents help choose its candidates. In a recent editorial, the Daily News referenced 1990, when under the blanket primary system, 47.2 percent of registered voters voted.

The Daily News has told us that the current Republican primary, in which everyone except Democrats can vote, causes low primary voter turnout, stating that only 24 percent of registered voters came out this year. (Actually, the figure excluded absentee ballots, the official turnout of registered voters was 28.2 percent.) Now 47.2 percent versus 24 percent sounds pretty bad, doesn't it? Those darn Republicans have done it again, suppressing voter turnout.

Well, it's not that bad, and in fact, it's not bad at all. The data and evidence discussed above that the type of primary does have no effect on voter turnout. What does matter is whether voters have a reason to vote in a primary election.

The main factor influencing turnout is whether the primaries present hotly contested statewide elections that capture voters' attention. What the newspaper has done is to ignore the real data and evidence in a bad case of "garbage in, garbage out" analysis.

What it conveniently fails to consider is the effect of the Motor Voter Act, which made it easier to register and harder to purge inactive names from voter rolls. Prior to Motor Voter's beginning in 1994, about 74 percent of Alaska's voting age population was registered to vote. After Motor Voter, the rolls swelled to the point where measuring voter turnout against the number of registered voters became meaningless.

For example, in 2000, Alaska had 436,215 voting age residents. Yet somehow that same year, there were 680,321 people registered to vote. Even if every one voted in that year, only 54.7 percent of "registered" voters would have voted. To use these numbers is either careless or intentionally misleading. To compare



years with Motor Voter to years without it is to compare apples and oranges. Clearly, the correct and meaningful measure for voter turnout is the percentage of Alaska's actual voting age population that votes. When this common sense comparison is done, the turnout for this year was 28.2 percent versus 35.4 percent in 1990, not the 23 percent spread our opponents incorrectly claim.

What explains the 7 percent difference? This year we had a contested Republican primary between Lisa Murkowski and Mike Miller, but no contest for the Democratic nomination. In 1990, the primary races for governor were hotly contested in both major parties.

Other than perhaps 1996 (with Arliss Sturgulewski vs. Walter Huddel, and a rematch of the tight 1992 matchup of Steve Cowper and Bill Sheffield), Alaska primaries have rarely seen such polarized heavyweights squaring off against each other. In the Republican primary, Sturgulewski edged out a plurality of only 41.4 percent against Rick Halford and Jim Campbell (the Republican nominee in 1994).

On the Democratic side, Troy Knowles beat sitting Lt. Gov. Steve McAlpin 57 percent to 43 percent. Surely, having two tough races that appeal to sympathizers of both major parties, as opposed to only one, is worth 7 percent.

A better comparison for this year is with the blanket (or open) primary year of 1996. Anchorage banker Dave Cuddy ran a serious and well-financed cam-

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

YOU HAVE TO WONDER ABOUT...

Knowles' pals

YOU WOULD THINK, with chums like Sen. Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts and Tom Daschle of South Dakota, that U.S. Senator Joseph P. Knowles would be looking for new friends who are not so dead set against Alaska.

Knowles, looking to replace U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski, was invited to Washington, D.C., earlier this month for a fund-raiser in his honor. One of the listed co-hosts? None other than annual rights advocate Wayne Pascale, top dog in the Humane Society of the United States — and no friend to this state.

You have to wonder why Pascale would bother helping Knowles, considering that the HSUS vehemently opposes the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race, hunting, trapping and virtually anything else of importance to Alaskans.

If we were to hazard a guess about Pascale's interest in Knowles, it would be that in a move as governor that infuriated, and still infuriates, much of rural Alaska, Knowles shut down predator control programs aimed at increasing game numbers. That's just a guess. Maybe Pascale believes that as a senator, Knowles would be of even more help.

The multinational HSUS, with estimated assets of more than \$85 million, according to the Center for Consumer Freedom, is the richest annual rights organization in the world. It has used its financial clout in bold initiative campaigns across the country to ban trapping, to block dove hunting in Michigan, and to win constitutional rights in Florida for pregnant pigs. No kidding.

Now, the organization's top guy, arguably one of the nation's most determined annual rights activists, believes Knowles is the best choice in Alaska's U.S. Senate race. It is none of our business, but it seems to us that Knowles needs new friends.

No wacky tobacco

BALLOT MEASURE 2, which asks voters to legalize marijuana in Alaska and would provide for state regulation of the weed, is enough to make you wonder what its proponents have been smoking.

Even if voters approved, federal law still prohibits marijuana possession and sales in Alaska — and state law is no protection from a federal warrant.

What makes it more odd is that anybody actually believes these now growing pot illegally would step up like good citizens to be regulated and taxed by the state. If they did, in quick succession they would hear from the Drug Enforcement Administration and the IRS.

When you add the negative effect of even more drugs on our streets and the immense size of any bureaucracy that would be necessary to regulate and tax marijuana — if you could find the growers and keep them out of a federal pen right enough for them to pay — the measure becomes downright ludicrous. Nancy Reagan had it right. Just say no.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Thursday September 30, 2004 **B-7**
WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

All sides weary of campaign ads

By TOM BRENNAN

One of our faithful readers gets really irate whenever I mention that my dog Jack is a Democrat. I'm not sure whether he thinks I am slandering dogs or Democrats, but he always calls.

Apparently he doesn't realize that complaining is the only certain way to make sure we keep repeating whatever behavior bugs him.

As I've mentioned, Jack has been a Democrat ever since a friend gave him a food dish with a Frito Ulmer sticker on it. The food dish thing makes him a typical Democrat. That's all I can tell you about his political leanings. I don't think he is a liberal and what he does on trees, suggests he is not an environmentalist.

He loves the outdoors and comes with me every chance he gets. But I gave up on him as a duck hunting dog and now leave him home when I venture into the marshes, he hates wading in cold water and sitting in blinks, waiting for ducks and geese to fly by.

Jack wants to get out in the woods after them, to find birds in the grass and point at them until they get nervous and fly out in front of my marring gun. Of course, I miss, the birds fly away, and the dog looks at me like he wants to send me home without my Brennan supper.

I tell him it's like catch and release hunting. He has fun, I have fun and nobody gets hurt. (Note to PETA: Hunters don't actually kill birds or animals. All participants — hunters, dogs and game — are actually biological re-actors. Afterward the re-actors retreat to their shelters to eat torti sandwiches and drink herbal tea.)

I also leave Jack home whenever I go out to the shooting range. My partner doesn't like dogs, he thinks they are like overly friendly relatives with bad breath and poor language skills. Hunting dogs are just a necessary evil and not to be socialized with.



The difference between dog breeds is utterly lost on him. For instance, he doesn't understand that Labs are big, friendly dogs that are almost totally dependent on their hunters to lure ducks and geese over their hiding places. Then the hunters shoot and pretend to bring the birds down.

Then the Lab will go bounding through the swamp, sniff out and retrieve the duck re-actor, bringing it to the hunter's hand. The dependence of the Lab on the hunter gives it a distinctively subservient attitude when given a command, a good one will respond instantly and gladly. His attitude, expressed while breathing hard, is "How can I help? Help? Help? Help?"

A pointer, like Jack, who is a Brit-larry, has an entirely different function and attitude. He uses his nose and stands to seek out hiding birds, which the hunter can then flush and pretend to shoot. The hunter is dependent on the dog to initiate contact between himself and his prey.

Because the pointer's role is so different, when the dog is given a command, he will respond relatively quickly. But his attitude is more like "What do you want? I'm working here."

Jack is growing increasingly nervous as the presidential election nears. He doesn't think his guy has much credibility as a man of the people whose wife just happens to have \$400 million or so in her bank account.

For that matter, it makes him nervous when John Kerry denounces tax cuts for rich people. The senator could add and probably should, the words "the me."

I tell the dog that I have \$800 million in the bank, too, and am just keeping quiet about it so the neighbors won't stare. He's not buying the claim and neither is my wife.

Even though he is a Democrat, Jack is fed up to here with political ads of all kinds and for offices at all levels, especially the ones that go "My opponent lies, cheats, steals and crawls on its belly like a snake."

This has been a very long campaign season and we all deserve a break. Election Day is coming, but not soon enough. Let's hope both sides are speaking to each other afterward.

Tom Brennan is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

The Anchorage Times

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Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Wednesday, September 29, 2004 B-7

DEMOCRATS PUMP OUT ...

Deceptive ads

THE CAMPAIGN OF U.S. Senate hopeful Tony Knowles must be setting records, even for Alaska, when it comes to spinning whoppers in its political ads.

It is unsurprising, we suppose. Democrats apparently would do anything to help him unseat incumbent Sen. Lisa Murkowski. The prize? Possible control of the Senate, and they have sent bushels of money — at least \$12 million — and an army of Outside troops to help Knowles.

Unfortunately, winning at this point, appears to be more important than what is right. Knowles very early on said he would eschew Outside third-party ads. He has not. Knowles said he would not campaign on the phony "nepotism" issue ad as portrayed as "Top Gun" Tony in the cockpit of a jet with the implied message that he was a jet pilot or crewman in combat in Vietnam. That is untrue.

And now? Trying to drum up veterans' votes, he falsely accuses Murkowski in a television ad of turning her back on veterans in a Senate vote, even though an amendment she sponsored will deliver \$1.2 billion more in health benefits this year to veterans.

DESPITE KNOWLES' claims to the contrary, Murkowski simply voted "no" on an amendment offered by Democrat Tom Daschle of South Dakota. It was a vote engineered by Senate Democrats to set up Republicans for campaign ads such as Knowles', and to bust the federal budget, leaving taxpayers holding the bag.

You are supposed to believe it was a vote on full funding for veterans' health programs — it was not — and that it failed 48-49. In truth, it was a procedural motion requiring 60 votes to pass, and Murkowski's made absolutely no difference.

While several veterans groups support guaranteed funding for health programs, most Republicans, including Murkowski, believe a flexible, discretionary approach is better. Why, after all, build yet another clumsy Medicare bureaucracy rife with problems?

Using the GOP's approach, the Department of Veterans Affairs this year will get \$61.8 billion, up from \$47.9 billion in 2001. While the Bush administration recommended nearly \$30 billion in VA health care, Murkowski's \$1.2 billion amendment pushes the amount this year to \$31.2 billion.

Sadly, even knowing all that, Knowles in a KTUU-TV interview brushes it all off, saying, a vote is a vote.

You have to wonder whether Knowles' Outside help understands Alaskans can be parsimonious about the truth, except when it comes to fish, antler sizes and how cold it was. So, unless he wants to brag about catching a 37-inch rainbow trout from the back of a cranky moose in 50-below weather, Knowles might want to maintain at least a nodding acquaintance with the truth in his ads.

Ferg's heart was as big as he was tall

By ELISE PAINOLIA

When I moved from Barrow to Anchorage, one of the first things I did was become a volunteer at the Bird Treatment and Learning Center (Bird TLC). I did it because all my life I have felt a special love and affinity towards birds.

I remember as a child dreaming that I was Superjail. After my mother would put out the lights in my room at night, I would huddle myself to sleep, dreaming that I was leaping out of the little window in my bedroom. My super powers allowed me to zoom straight up, thereby missing the wall that was 3 feet on the other side of that window.

I would spend the night flying through the sky, never touching ground. It wasn't necessary in my dream for me to do any great deeds. The whole point of the dream was the flying.

I've spent a good deal of my life envying birds their ability to shake the bonds of earth and gravity and soar above us. I love watching them fly and seeing the sheer joy of their flight. And so I know that volunteering at Bird TLC was for me because I would be helping sick and injured birds return to the heavens where they belonged.

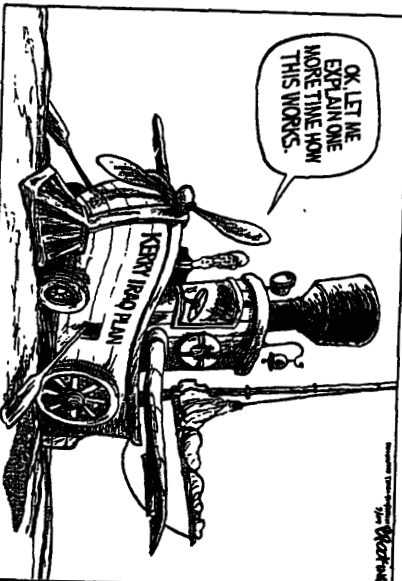


Recently, as if to Palkotak makes this whole experience even more joyful, I was given the privilege of releasing a healed eagle to the wild.

There is no way to describe the feeling of holding an eagle that you once cared for when it was too sick to care for itself and then throwing your arms up and letting the trees to once again become fond of all it surveys. It was probably as close to flying as I will ever get because my soul soared with that eagle.

If I had one sadness on the day I released the eagle, it was that the man who had come to represent for me the heart and soul of Bird TLC was not there to share it.

I met him on one of my first days at the center. He was standing at a large



tub washing eagle male. This is probably the least fun job there. Eagles confined to a small space still answer nature's call as often as they would otherwise except it's all contained in that small space. Washing those mats takes love.

This man caught my attention because he was so tall that he had moved to the platform that we all used to get up to the tub and was just standing there able to reach in with no trouble. I asked him how he was and was told his name was Ferg. He came in whenever he was needed to help, whether it was picking up birds, transporting birds, caring for birds or cleaning their messes.

For many people, I imagine the first sight of Ferg would give pause for thought. At about 6-foot-5-inches and as solid as they come, he would certainly make you think twice about being anything but extremely polite and courteous to him at all times.

He was the only man I ever saw who actually intimidated the eagles. Whereas the rest of us would have to carefully enter the holding pens to pick them up, carefully put a blanket over them and ever so carefully grab their legs, all the time making sure we had a quick exit available if needed, Ferg just walked into the pen. The eagle would

look up, know he'd met his match and not struggle at all. I watched this giant of a man handle the biggest eagles and the smallest chickadees with tenderness and care. I looked forward to the days he'd show up during my shift to sing a silly Christmas carol to me, his way of teasing me for my bash humbling attitude towards the holidays.

In talking to other volunteers, I've come to find out that I wasn't the only one who would occasionally wander by the center in the hope he'd be there so we could just chat a bit. A chat with Ferg just made the day seem lighter.

For a variety of reasons, Ferg isn't at the center anymore. I'm not sure this column makes clear just how unpressed I always was by his tenderness and kindness to God's smallest and most helpless creatures while he was there. I hope it does because I didn't get to say goodbye to Ferg before he left. If I had, I would have told him he was the greatest giant in body, soul and spirit I'd ever met.

Elise Painolia, an Anchorage five-time writer and author of Parallel Logic, a humorous look back at her 28 years in Barrow, lives in Anchorage and owns Precious Cargo Ltd., a writing/graphics company.

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Senior Editor

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

FUND TRUSTEES RENEW PUSH FOR ...

POW system

THE ALASKA Permanent Fund trustees have renewed their call for the Legislature to authorize using a "percent of market value" formula for determining payouts.

Their idea is a good one and should be approved, but agreement by the Legislature has bogged down in disputes over how the money would be spent. The trustees take no position on how the cash is used.

But many people, including us, feel that a portion should go toward supporting the cost of state government.

Opponents of changing the formula want fund earnings to be used only for the annual dividend checks sent out to all Alaskans each October. There are many problems with that, including and perhaps most importantly, that it perverts the purpose for which the fund was established.

When the fund was set up in 1976, it was sold to the voters as a way to keep some money out of the hands of legislators of that time and pay the future cost of state government. Using the fund earnings for the giveaway program came several years later and was enthusiastically accepted. Since oil money was still flowing into the state treasury in then-unmanageable volumes, public needs could be met with available flows of oil tax and royalty cash.

THE TIME for using any fund earnings for state spending was pushed further into the future when the state won several huge legal battles with North Slope producers over oil prices and allowable costs of production and transportation.

That windfall prompted voters to approve the Constitutional Budget Reserve, which provided a multibillion-dollar cushion to meet the state's immediate fiscal needs.

The day of reckoning is approaching. Recent high oil prices have closed the budget gap for the time being, but those are unlikely to last forever and the Legislature will be forced to decide the use-of-earnings issue.

Certainly the dividend program should be continued in some form and a portion of earnings used for the individual checks. But unless part of the earnings is used for state spending, Alaska will be faced with painful new taxes, perhaps bringing back the individual income tax, if not more.

Putting all the Permanent Fund earnings into the free money program while dipping into the pockets of working Alaskans would be an intolerable breach of faith with those who voted for the fund in 1976.

Fund Chairman Carl Brady Jr. said at the trustees' recent annual meeting "A percent of market value payout is necessary to ensure that the fund is protected from overspending in the future, and will continue to be a high priority for us until it is achieved."

The Legislature should heed Brady's words and get the job done.

Kerry sister undercuts key U.S. ally

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

Of all our allies in the world, which is the only one to have joined the United States in the fight in every war in the past 100 years? Not Britain, and Canada, certainly not France. The answer is Australia.

Australia does not share only a community of values with the United States. It understands that its safety rests ultimately on a stable international structure that, in turn, rests not on parchment treaties but on the power and credibility of the United States. Which is why Australia is with us today in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

Australian Prime Minister John Howard has taken great risks and much political heat for his support of America. There is a national election in Australia on Oct. 9, and the race is neck and neck between Howard and Labor Party leader Mark Latham. Latham has pledged to withdraw from Iraq.

This is a critical election not only for Australia but also for the United States. Think of the effect on America, its frontline soldiers and its coalition partners if one of its closest allies turns tail and runs.

The terrorists are well aware of this potential effect. Everyone knows about the train bombings in Madrid that succeeded in bringing down a pro-American government and led to Spain's precipitous withdrawal from Iraq. But few here noticed that this month's car bombing in Jakarta, Indonesia, was designed to have precisely the same effect.

Where was the bomb set off? At the Australian Embassy. When was it set off? Just weeks before the Australian election and just three days before the only televised debate between Howard and Latham.

The terrorists' objective is to undermine all countries allied with America. Make them bleed and tell them this is the price they pay for being a U.S. ally. The implication is obvious: Abandon America and buy your safety.

That is what the terrorists are saying. Why is the Kerry campaign saying the same thing? John Kerry's campaign has warned Australians that the Howard Government's support for the U.S. in Iraq has made



them a bigger target for international terrorists. So reports the Weekend Australian (Sept. 18).

Americans Overseas for Kerry is the Kerry operation for winning the crucial votes of Americans living abroad (remember the Florida recount?), including more than 100,000 who live in Australia. Its leader was interviewed Sept. 16 by The Australian's Washington correspondent, Roy Eckstein. Asked if he believed the terrorist threat to Australians was now greater because of the support for President Bush, she replied "I would have to say that, noting that 'the most recent attack was on the Australian embassy in Jakarta.'"

She said this of her country (and of the war that Australia is helping us with in Iraq): "We are endangering the Australians now by this wanton damage for international law and multilateral channels." Mark Latham could not have said it better. Nor could Latham himself, the al Qaeda affiliate that killed nine people in the Jakarta bombing.

This Kerry spokesman, undermining a key ally on the eve of a critical election, is no rogue political operative. She is the head of Americans Overseas for Kerry — Diana Kerry, sister to John.

She is, of course, merely echoing her brother, who at a time when allies have shown great political courage in facing down both terrorists and domestic opposition for their assistance to the United States in Iraq, calls these allies the "coalition of the coerced and the bribed."

The Anchorage Times

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This article and reckless put-down more than undermines our best friends abroad. It demonstrates the cynicism of Kerry's promise to broaden our coalition in Iraq. If this is how Kerry repays America's closest allies — rebuking the likes of Tony Blair and John Howard — who does he think is going to step up tomorrow to be America's friend?

The only thing that distinguishes Kerry's Iraq proposal from Bush's is his promise to deploy his unique, near-mythical ability to bring in new allies to fight and pay for the war in Iraq — "to make Iraq the world's responsibility" and get others to "share the burden," as he said this week at New York University.

Yet even Richard Holbrooke, a top Kerry foreign policy adviser, admits that the president of France is not going to call up President Kerry and say, "How many divisions should I send to Iraq?" Nor will anyone else. Kerry abuses America's closest friends while courting those, like Germany and France, that have deliberately undermined America before, during and after the war. What lessons are leaders abroad to draw from this when President Kerry asks them pretty please in the most insidious French — to put themselves on the line for the United States?

Charles Krauthammer writes a weekly, nationally syndicated column for the Washington Post. His column is distributed by the Washington Post Writers Group. © Copyright 2004 The Washington Post Co.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

SMOKERS MAY BEGIN A...

'Life of crime'

MAJOR MARK BEGICH and the Anchorage Assembly have decided to take their chances and hope that the dollar-a-pack increase in the city's cigarette tax won't bring a wave of crime here.

They have the support of Anchorage Police Chief Walt Moragan, who doesn't think a crime wave and enforcement problem are likely, but the facts seem worthy of concern. The Alaska Department of Revenue looks at the risk somewhat differently and doesn't want the volume of illegal activity to get any larger than it is already.

Tobacco is the state's second-largest stream of cash, after oil, and encouraging black marketing could endanger that stream. Last fiscal year, cigarettes brought \$48 million into the state treasury.

Forty-two million packs of legal cigarettes are sold in Alaska each year. That equals 4.2 million cartons or about 88 40-foot container loads per year, one every four days. The federal, state and local taxes on one container load are about \$1.6 million on cigarettes worth about \$580,000 before taxes. Stalled smugglers could make more than \$1 million per container.

The volume of black-market smokes here is unknown and may not be large enough to attract organized crime, though that has been the experience in urban areas of the Lower 48. Organized crime and even terrorist groups, including al-Qaida, are getting into cigarette smuggling because demand is high and penalties are much lower than in the drug trade.

Possession of more than 5,000 unstamped cigarettes — 250 packs or 25 cartons — is a Class C felony and carries a possible \$5,000 fine. Many smugglers are successful in plugging the felony charges to misdemeanors and getting little or no jail time, much different treatment than is likely for a drug bust. Having less than 5,000 illegal cigarettes in possession is a misdemeanor with a fine of up to \$1,000.

If large-scale smuggling doesn't occur, the more likely "crime wave" is a gray market in which Anchorage smokers will drive to the Valley or the Kenai Peninsula to buy their smokes. After all, the saving would be more than \$12 a carton, a trundle of cigarettes — if properly stored to preserve freshness — would save a bundle and could last a tobacco addict for months.

Assembly Chairman Dick Traana said he suspects Mat-Su will soon impose a similar tax, which would reduce the attraction of buying cigarettes there. And — who knows — the Kenai Peninsula Borough might do the same.

Traana said Begich's estimate that the tax boost will raise \$8.9 million incorporates a "leakage" factor of up to 35 percent. That means the estimate will hold even if 35 percent of all cigarettes smoked in Anchorage are bought elsewhere. We'll believe all this works out when we see it. In the meantime, let's hope our tobacco-addicted neighbors don't start a life of crime.

Stop whining about income inequality

By **WALTER E. WILLIAMS**

Shaquille O'Neal (\$32 million), Tiger Woods (\$80 million), Oprah Winfrey (\$210 million), Barry Bonds (\$23 million), Mel Gibson (\$210 million) and Lance Armstrong (\$19 million) are at or near the top of their professions, and their annual earnings show it. But is it fair?

After all, there are many other decent, hard-working basketball and baseball players, movie producers and bicyclists who don't earn anywhere near that kind of income. For example, Shaq is a professional basketball player, and so is Jamal Sampson. What's just about Shaq being paid \$31 million and Jamal \$349,458? This is gross income inequality.

Why do some people earn higher income compared to others? Are they simply "winners in the lottery of life," as Rep. Richard Gephardt, D-Mo., puts it? Nothing can be further from the truth. People are different. Among the ways we differ are ambition, ability, aptitude, perseverance, intelligence and physical strength.

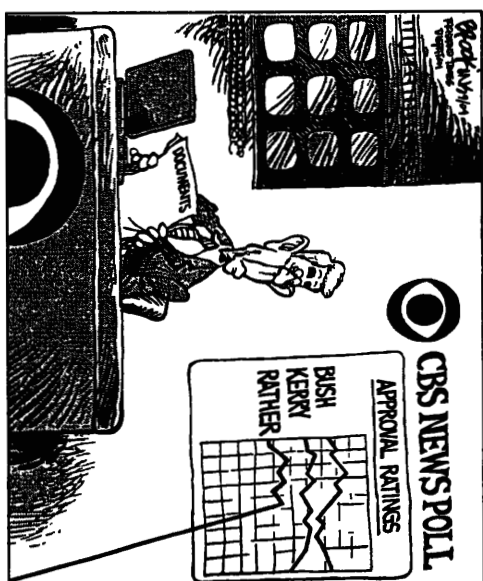
Some people pursue paths that are more rewarding than others. Then, there's the sheer luck of having demanding parents, talented mentors and being in the right place at the right time.

There's another explanation for income differences that people seldom take into account — vicious consumer discrimination.

Shaquille plays basketball, and so can I. So why don't I earn as much money?

It's because millions of people like you will plunk down \$80 to \$500 to watch Shaquille play, but how much will you plunk down to watch me play? You might even expect me to pay you.

In sports, at least, it's fairly easy to see that those who are more productive tend to earn the higher salaries. Their productivity might be measured by the points they score and/or their impact on



gale revenues. Mel Gibson's and Oprah Winfrey's earnings are explained by productivity as well, they satisfy millions upon millions of people.

Another perhaps more useful way of explaining earnings differentials is that one's earnings depend on his ability to serve his fellow man plus the value his fellow man places upon that service.

Then, there's a supply side of the story. Shaquille earns many times more than the brightest neurosurgeon. Why? It isn't because basketball is more important to society than neurosurgery, it's because the supply of people with aptitudes to become bright neurosurgeons far exceeds those with skills to do what Shaquille does.

However, if it were the other way around, thousands upon thousands with Shaquille skills and few with neurosurgeon skills, the earnings picture would be reversed.

People spend too much time worrying about income inequality. Listening to much of that discussion, one would

think that it's a dealer of dollars who determines income. The reason some people have more money than others is that the dollar dealer is a racist, sexist or multinationalist. Hence, justice requires a redistributing or redistribution of the dollars.

Far better good could be done for our fellow man by focusing more of our attention on productive inequality rather than income inequality. Income inequality is a result, and it's productive inequality that mostly explains that result rather than some insidious plot afoot.

Whether it's individuals or countries, one seldom sees highly productive people poor or highly unproductive people rich unless there are government restrictions and subsidies at play.

Making people more productive is the challenge. Whining about income inequality is a cop-out.

Walter E. Williams is a professor at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va. His column is distributed by Creators Syndicate Inc., 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 704, Los Angeles, CA 90046; (310) 337-7000.

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Voice of the Times

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

ANOTHER POLITICAL FANTASY . . .

'Top gun' Tony

POLITICAL ADS are the surrogate-candidate of the election season, but some are worse than others, and the worst are those that continue to run even when shown to be misleading.

A Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee ad for Tony Knowles, who is trying to unseat Republican Sen. Lisa Murkowski and needs Alaska's veterans to pull it off, is one of the worst.

The ad that has aired with monotonous regularity shows "Top Gun" Tony sitting in a military jet and proclaiming him a veteran. It is merely a cleaned-up version of an earlier ad that said he was a combat veteran who served in Vietnam.

The implication is — and certainly was — that Knowles was a jet pilot or crew member in a combat zone. That was untrue when the ad was made and it is untrue today. In the mid-80s, when Knowles was in Vietnam as an enlisted pilot to image interpreter, Snoopy was more likely to fly in a dog-fight with the Red Baron than Knowles was to fly jets in the Vietnam War.

You have to wonder: Why the stretch? Knowles serves in Vietnam was honorable, so why do his ads continue to make something more, especially when such self-aggrandizing embellishments are frowned upon in the military and veterans community. Despite its crass untruthfulness, the ad has received wide airplay.

NONE OF THIS image manipulation should be surprising, we suppose. After all, Democratic Party officials sent Byron Dorgan, D-N.D., to help Knowles, at least according to *Roll Call* magazine.

Messner, serving as Knowles' campaign director, earlier headed the staff of Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., and ran his 2002 election campaign, which included a political advertisement that put a home run for negative political images. The Baucus TV ad, supposedly attacking the GOP rival for mis-spending federal education funds, presented images that imitated he was a homosexual. Viewed in that context, a little photographic fiddling putting Knowles in jets in Vietnam seems less surprising.

Veterans, and all Alaskans for that matter, should be perplexed. Along with refusing to distance himself from presidential candidate John Kerry, who slandered all Vietnam veterans in his testimony before the 1971 Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee continues to peddle the tallest of tales on his behalf.

And Knowles? He is silent.

All of this, in our view, is unbecoming for someone who wants to represent Alaska in the US Senate.

Give politics a rest . . . think Shootout

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

ON THIS LAST SUNDAY of September, friends, let's begin with a quick quiz that has nothing to do with politics or political campaigning. What school has won the most Carls-Salway Great Alaska Shootout championships?

The answer: Well, it's a four-way tie. North Carolina State, North Carolina, Kentucky and Purdue have each won two Shootout titles since play began back in 1978. Purdue's second victory came in last year's hoops extravaganza at the Sullivan Arena.

SINCE THE SUBJECT of the Shootout has arisen, you might want to clip and save this. The lineup for this year's basketball tournament includes three schools that make the NCAA tournament last March — Washington, Utah and Alabama. Along with the host UAA Seawolves, they will seek the 2004 Shootout title against a field that also includes Furman, High Point of North Carolina, Minnesota and Oklahoma.



Seawolves will be the Tobin

On the women's side, the Tobin Seawolves will be hosting Eastern Washington, Louisiana-Lafayette and Stanford. Action gets under way on the women's side at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 23, with UAA opposing Louisiana-Lafayette. Play in the men's tourney bracket starts Wednesday at 7:30 p.m., with UAA going against Alabama in a game that will be telecast nationally on ESPN2. The women's championship game is scheduled Wednesday evening and the men's final will begin at 6 p.m. on Saturday, the 27th, in a game that will be telecast by ESPN.

IN CONNECTION with the need to plan ahead, the ever-shorter days of this time of the year means it's time to think about putting up your outdoor lights because just a month away is the annual "City of Lights" celebration. The official start will be at 5:45 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 29 — downtown in Town.



"Is it true you like your employees to speak their minds, Big Boss?"

Square, and in Eagle River at Chief Alex Park. The simultaneous lighting of municipal Christmas trees will be accompanied by free hot chocolate and cookies for everybody on hand. The lights on your homes, and offices should be switched on at the same time — to remain burning until the last team in the 2005 Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race crosses the finish line in Nome next March.

SPREADING OF OUTDOOR activities, the joys of gambling McKinley is going up. Effective next season, the special license to sign up for an attempt on either Mount McKinley or Mount Foraker will be \$200. That's \$50 more than it was this year. Denali National Park managers say they collect upwards of \$170,000 a year in climbing fees. The increased charge will help offset the cost of maintaining rescue teams, among other things — which, you'll grant, is important, in case you suddenly find yourself in need of a quick rescue mission.

GOOD NIGHT, NURSE: Dr. Tina DeLapp, who has done sterling work as head of the School of Nursing at the University of Alaska Anchorage, retired just before Labor Day — a rightly proud of over the years having helped nearly 1,000 students move from the campus into registered nursing positions here and throughout the state. Dr. Jack-in-Rhino, no newcomer to the UAA program, has dropped up to be interim director of the school for the 2004-05 academic year, while a national search is under way to select a permanent director. She has served for the last year as associate director of the school, and for many years chaired UAA's baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs.

ON THE CULINARY scene, general manager Steve Manz and chef Taylor Perry are unveiling new menu items at Sullivan's Steakhouse, a favorite downtown attraction that features classic restaurant dining and a warm and friendly saloon, complete with live music on the weekends. And don't overlook two other exceptions at downtown restaurants that are among Alaska's best: Constans', downtown on Fifth Avenue across from the Hotel Captain Cook, and the Marx Bros. Cafe, offering elegant fare in a little house on Third Avenue, midway between F and G streets.

HISTORY ON THE LINE: If you were a betting person, would you wager a dollar that no one has ever served five times as president of the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce? If you did, you'd win the buck. But you'd lose if you bet that there has never been a four-time chamber president. Clyde Ellis did that, from 1938 through 1941. Harry F. Morton also served as president during the four-year span between 1930 and 1933, but he shared the office in 1932 and 1933 with Robert S. Bragaw and Thomas C. Price, respectively. The last in your trivia book of Anchorage's mostly forgotten past, **NAMES OF NOTE:** Jacques Burton, retired chief of the Federal Aviation Agency in Alaska and president of the Air Force Association, is leaving Alaska this fall to return to her old home town of Gig Harbor, Wash. Capt. Jon Powell will succeed her as president of the local AFA chapter. Kevin Hand, something of a veteran in the business of politics and public relations, is the new executive director of Arctic Power, the official lobbying organization pushing for the opening of ANWR.

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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Editor

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Editor

Saturday, September 25, 2004 B-7

FOR THEIR OWN KIDS, TEACHERS SUPPORT...

School choice

A NEW STUDY contains some damning evidence about the state of the nation's schools. Even teachers are trying to send their kids elsewhere for classes.

The Thomas B. Fordham Institute study shows that teachers are nearly twice as likely as other parents to send their kids to private schools. The Washington Times reported.

"More than one in five public school teachers said their children attend private schools," the newspaper said. "In Washington (28 percent), Baltimore (35 percent) and 16 other major cities the figure is more than one in four. In some cities nearly half of the children of public school teachers have abandoned public schools."

Forty-four percent of Philadelphia's teachers put their kids in private schools, 41 percent of Cincinnati's do likewise, and in Chicago, 39 percent of the teachers have opted for private schools for their kids. In San Francisco-Oakland, 34 percent chose private schools, New York City and New Jersey suburbs, 33 percent, Milwaukee and New Orleans, 29 percent.

Teachers, the newspaper reported, told researchers private and religious schools offer greater discipline, promote academic achievement and offer a "better overall atmosphere."

Nationwide, 12.2 percent of all families enroll their children in private schools.

If so many teachers who intimately know our education system believe it is failing, believe it to the extent that they are shipping their kids to private schools, it is beyond time to act. We need school choice for everybody, and we need it now. Now if only the politically powerful teachers unions could see past their narrow self-interest and help fix the mess they helped create.

Shameful stuff

JUST AS A brief commentary on the election campaign, Tony Knowles keeps running truly ugly attack ads, contending that Lisa Murkowski is doing all kinds of terrible things as a senator — and illustrates them with computer-declared facial photos that make her look like the Wicked Witch of the West.

And each of these TV spots ends with this statement, "I'm Tony Knowles, and I approved of this message."

Who had he did. It tells us more about Tony than it does about Lisa. Would he approve a similar ad by his opponent were it directed to make his wife, Susan, look like a heart-eyed hag? She isn't, and neither is Lisa.

Tony ought to be ashamed.

Letters to The Times

Lip service continues

Nice work on your Aug. 29 column, "Alaska, sadly, isn't what it used to be."

There seems to be a trend developing where people are forced to endure drunks on streets, law breakers on wheels and inefficient services of our elected and hired servants.

We in Mountain View are all too familiar with rising property taxes, but diminishing quality of life. Not even a bank or credit union will venture into Mountain View.

On any given day or night, boom boxes cruise the neighborhood rattling windows on houses more than 100 feet away. Just try to get a decent night's sleep. Only if you live in a bomb shelter. But don't bother the city with your tale of woe.

They don't have the time to answer your pleas for help. I know, because myself and others have tried numerous times to get some sort of response from city officials and servants with no luck. But you can bet lip service will continue and that property taxes will continue to rise. You can count on that.

James D. Mackey
Anchorage

In Tony's defense

I think that anyone who downplays a veteran's service is simply un-American. The Voice of the Times, in its not so subtle way, is trying to discredit Tony Knowles' service in Vietnam. I don't care if a soldier was a jet pilot, an infantry troop, a swift boat captain, or a cook in the mess tent, their service was honorable.

Please do not listen to what the Voice of the Times.

There was nothing false or spun about Tony Knowles' record. Tony Knowles served his country voluntarily during the Vietnam War, and that is what should be remembered.

Conrad Villages
Anchorage

Kerry doesn't instill trust

It has been said that a house divided against itself can not stand. The truth



I used the catchy phrase that became so popular as the punch line in a particular fast-food chain's TV commercials several years ago.

Following President Bush's acceptance speech, I can say, without fear of contradiction, that "I've found the beef." President Bush's speech clearly set forth his agenda for the next four years.

Likewise, it was very substantive in that it addressed the central issues facing America today — the fight to defeat terrorism and keep our country safe from harm, and the challenge to continue our country's expansion of the national economy.

No need, now, to ask, "Where's the beef?" It is found in President Bush's acceptance speech.

Vernon R. Wilgus
West Palm Beach, Fla.

Smiling is never a waste

Bill Tobin clearly described many negative practices in our society in his Aug. 23 column. I hope he will write future columns offering suggestions and solutions to encourage and inspire all of us to instigate positive human interactions.

Most of what he wrote about are interactions with strangers. People often go home frustrated because of moments in their day affected by strangers. Every person should be treated as a person, not just something that we have to deal with or wait for.

Look everyone you deal with in the eye and smile. Find something to compliment them on, jewelry, clothing, attitude. Respond pleasantly to everyone who speaks to you, even if it is saying "no" to a panhandler.

Whether your positive energy is immediately reciprocated or not, you will feel better for it. Trying to brighten someone else's day is never a waste. Those who give light are never left in the dark.

A saying I try to remind myself of daily (sometimes hourly) is this: Never underestimate the power you have to affect someone's day. Use it wisely.

Roberta M. Paine
Anchorage

Found "the beef"

After the Democrat presidential candidate's acceptance speech, I asked, on this page, the question "Where's the Beef?"

That question reflected my conclusion that Sen. John Kerry's acceptance speech lacked substance, contained no suggestion as to what his agenda would be were he elected, and, in short, contained no "beef." To dramatize my point

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Staff Editor

Friday, September 24, 2004 B-7

NATIONAL CONFERENCE BRINGS...

State leaders

NAIL DOWN or hide your valuables, folks. More than 1,500 politicians from around the country are in Anchorage for a national gathering of state leaders.

The Conference of State Governments is meeting Saturday through Wednesday and will be addressing a variety of issues of interest to Alaska. The group is composed largely of legislators from the 50 states and several from Canadian provinces, but the meeting will also include the governors of four states, among them our own.

Frank Murkowski is president of the group and Alaska Senate President Gene Theriault is chairman of the host committee. Governors from other states coming for the session include Mike Huckabee of Arkansas, David Perdue of Wyoming and Ruth Ann Minner of Delaware.

Among the issues the group will discuss or hear about in their work sessions will be the gas pipeline, the impact on states of the "No Child Left Behind" law, and a variety of land, water, energy, trade and transportation matters.

THERIAULT SAID some of the Western legislators are nervous about the possibility that a flood of gas from Alaska could depress the price of gas from their states. They will be reassured that such an impact is unlikely.

Theriault pointed out that though legislators from other states have no jurisdiction over Alaska issues, having them as knowledgeable friends and potential supporters would be a genuine benefit. And some are quite likely to move up in their careers to positions in Congress.

Three local hosts will take more than 100 of the visiting dignitaries to Prudhoe Bay for a first-hand look at the way Alaska's oil fields are being developed. The governors won't go — their schedules are too tight — but having a 737 load of Outside legislators go away with an understanding of how things are done in Alaska won't hurt.

Some of the visitors came early to go fishing and sightseeing, others will stay afterward. The national gathering of the Council of State Governments was a good catch for Alaska and resulted from some heavy-duty lobbying within the group by Gov. Murkowski, Theriault and others.

ANWR is not listed as a formal agenda item, but Alaska legislators are certain to give their visiting counterparts an earful on the subject. May the buzzing begin.

Correction

ON THURSDAY, a column about tomorrow's dedication of the Purple Heart monument on the Delaney Park Strip contained an error.

Brig. Gen. Thomas Westfall is commander of the Alaska State Defense Force. Maj. Gen. Mitch Aboud is former commander of the force.

Cigarettes were easy; what's next?

By PAUL JENKINS

Always on the lookout for somebody to fleece, the Anchorage Assembly unanimously decided Tuesday night to stick it to smokers for the good of the community.

At Mayor Mark Begich's request, Assembly members decided tobacco users need to carry more than their fair share in this city by paying \$1 more for a pack of cigarettes, or \$10 more a carton, starting Oct. 1. Taxes on other tobacco products, now figured at 15 percent of the wholesale price, will skyrocket to 45 percent of wholesale.

The promise, yet unfulfilled, is that the Assembly will offset property taxes with any and all revenue from the increased tobacco tax. That means those of us who do not smoke will mull tax benefits of about \$3 million from those who do. Pretty neat.

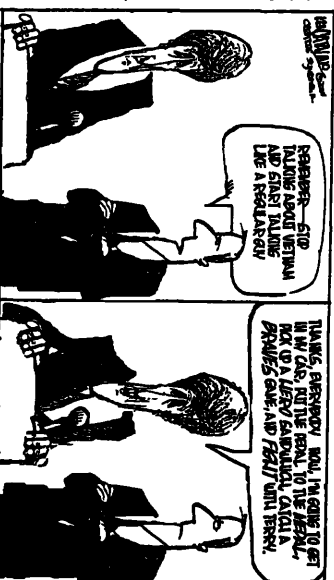
None of the money from this scam will go to keeping junior from smoking, or anything else, mind you. Not a penny.

This vote was government. At its most cynical. The Assembly by hammering smokers because it could.

Jenkins because there are fewer of them than there are non-smokers. It is counting on the rest of us to pocket the ill-gotten gains and keep our noses shut.

The city can pull this off because the tax in question is labeled an excise tax, not a sales tax that would require approval from 60 percent of the city's voters. Begich explains that an excise tax is a levy on a thing, not a price. That seems a difference without much distinction to me, and I'm unsure how all that works when you consider the wholesale price tax increase the Assembly just tacked on tobacco. That sounds like a sales tax to me.

During Tuesday's meeting, there was, as usual when it comes time to slap smokers around, the expected angst about their costs to society. There were the tired claims that \$1 a pack would keep little Johnny from taking his first



puff, that a tax increase would reduce the number of smokers overall, making all our lives ever so much better. It would be good for the community, tax supporters said. It would be good for kids. Predictably, it would be good for just about everybody.

Even if all that were true, and it is not, what does it have to do with tax policy and equity and fairness? When did we start believing that it is okay to single out regulations who do something we disapprove of and hand them our tax bills? Have we reached the sad point where we accept arbitrary and capricious and punitive tax policies based on our like or dislike of a certain social behavior? Are we now satisfied to use inequitable taxes for social engineering when we know such practices are wrong? Our forefathers would disown us.

I don't smoke. In a perfect world nobody would, but being a smoker does not make you less of a citizen and it should not mean that government or your fellow citizens should somehow benefit from your addiction.

If we are going to punatively tax based on supposed costs to society and impact on changes in behavior, why not tax old people? They cost a ton of money in medical bills and other expenses. Or, how about poor people sick from other causes, or homosexuals with AIDS, or people who do not speak English? They all cost keep little Johnny from taking his first

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DAN RATHER'S SHODDY WORK SHOWS ...

CBS bias

AS THE FUBOR continues over CBS anchorman Dan Rather's admission that he used falsified documents in an attack piece on President Bush during a "60 Minutes" program, you have to wonder when, or if, the entire story will come out.

Whatever else surfaces, it is clear CBS went well over the line in going after Bush with bogus evidence, and in doing so the network destroyed its credibility and damaged journalism everywhere.

Published reports show that CBS arranged for former Texas National Guard officer Bill Burkett — a Bush opponent — to talk with Joe Lockhart, a top aide to presidential hopeful John Kerry. Burkett told USA Today he agreed to turn over the documents to the network if it would arrange a conversation with the Kerry campaign. Burkett says he just wanted to give the Kerry team some advice.

The network, which at first stood by the bogus memos and the ensuing story, has dropped its defense and admitted it acted as a conduit to Lockhart, a former Clinton aide.

Rather on Monday finally, after days of defending his actions, the documents and the story, told a CBS Evening News audience, "I want to say, personally, directly, I'm sorry." It makes you want to ask whether he truly is sorry or sorry he got nailed and destroyed his legacy.

THIS DEBACLE clearly shows Rather so wanted the story to be true, the documents real, that he failed checks and rechecks of his facts and sources that are routine for journalists, especially those of Rather's experience who are about to break a major story. He became the victim of his own bias, too often an occupational hazard nowadays.

Add to that his network's acting as a go-between for his source and the Kerry campaign. That was a breach of ethics, pure and simple. If the story were about Kerry, how would the network have acted? Would there have been a story? If there were, would it have been so sloppily vetted?

One can imagine CBS and Rather desperately wanting to move on, but there are several important questions remaining. Who forged the documents? Where did Burkett get them? Who else is involved? Those are questions CBS should be answering itself — if it dares.

It will be enlightening to see if the rest of the news media pursues answers to those prickly questions and lays out in detail how the network news operation made famous by Edward R. Murrow's hard work and integrity could fall into such ruin.

Without the truth, the complete truth and nothing but the truth, who will ever be able to believe Rather or CBS again?

Purple Heart is a badge of honor

By HERB RHODES

One of the nation's most esteemed military medals will stand at attention, front and center, here on Saturday with the dedication of a Purple Heart monument on the Delaney Park strip.

These historic medallions date back to George Washington. Sorry, Mr. and Mrs. American, they're not for sale. So even if you have staggering wealth, are a persona of towering influence and political persuasion. Same answer. No for sale.

Holding a Purple Heart is a special privilege, reserved for a special cadre of American men and women, those who went into the line of fire against Uncle Sam's enemies, risking lives and limbs, losing their blood to God's green earth, blue skies and salty seas.

Only hostile enemy fire can buy one a treasured Purple Heart. Many a time, and oft, as Shakespeare would say, the price is the ultimate: a final vent to the Valley of the Shadow and the Kingdom of Heaven. On August 7, 1782, at his New-



Rhodes

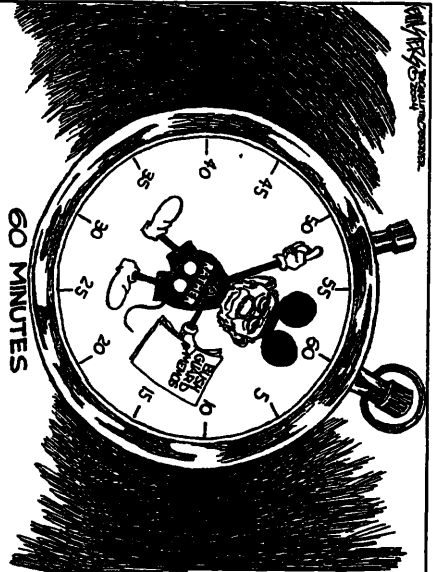
burgh, N.Y. headquarters, General George Washington created the first Purple Heart — then known as the Badge of Military Merit.

The design was the figure of a heart in purple cloth or silk edged with narrow lace and it was to be given for any singularly meritorious action. Washington himself only awarded the badge to three soldiers.

After being revived by General Douglas MacArthur in 1932, the badge became known as the Purple Heart and is now reserved exclusively for those men and women wounded in the line of duty.

On Saturday, at 3 p.m. two Purple Heart honorees will unveil Anchorage's salute to those wounded and killed in defense of America's freedom.

Prud, distinguished men and women will be at the site on the Park Strip. Among them Capt. Hal Campbell, a Marine veteran of three wars. Yes, he has a



Purple Heart. As a matter of fact he has four, plus a Silver Star and a Bronze Star and a Navy Cross, the nation's highest award next to the Medal of Honor.

At Tanana, in World War II, Campbell single-handedly attacked and wiped out a row of heavily fortified Japanese block houses with scattered charges after his buddy was killed before his eyes. The famed Admiral Bull Halsey personally presented the young Marine with his Navy Cross.

At Chosin Reservoir in Korea, where the First Marine Division of 18,000 men was surrounded by 220,000 Chinese, soldiers, Campbell helped the Marines break through to freedom, taking their dead and wounded with them. The temperature 80 below zero. Thus the term "The Frozen Chosin." Scores won Purple Hearts.

Also present for the historical dedication will be Maj. Gen. Mitch Aboud of Anchorage, commander of the Alaska State Defense Force. Aboud holds a Bronze Star and Purple Heart from World War II. Unveiling the memorial will be five area Purple Heart winners: Ted Graham, Nick Nelson, Ron Siebels, Lou Fessler and John Jigdon.

And if you lose control of your emotions and want to cry a bit, and dab those tired eyes, and recall whatever Purple Heart memories that the ceremony might evoke, direct or indirect, there are special orders for your day. Cry away. Forgiveness is granted.

Herb Rhodes was a Navy gunnery officer in World War II and was awarded a Purple Heart after being critically wounded while going ashore with the 5th Marine Division during the invasion of Iwo Jima. He is the author of "Hungry for Wood," a book-length memoir subtitled "From the shores of two lines to the Tundra of Alaska."

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TODD
State editor

Wednesday, September 22, 2004 **B-7**

IRAQ IS NOT REALLY A...

Basket case

IS IRAQ in chaos? And are American forces and their Coalition allies fighting a losing war against a general uprising there?

Contrary to the impression given by many major news media and considerable political rhetoric, the answer to both questions is a resounding, "No!"

The Wall Street Journal and other serious observers report that Coalition troops are battling with relatively small but extremely violent Iraqi groups that have their own agendas. The Journal, despite the business orientation suggested by its name, is one of the nation's best and most objective news organizations. Its opinions are worth the nation's attention — on many subjects.

Most of the Iraqi cities and countryside are normally quiet and working toward reconstruction and a stable government, the Journal reports. The exceptions, which understandably draw so much of the American media's attention, are centers of violence like Fallujah.

And the enemy consists of Saddam Hussein's former Fedayeen followers, his intelligence services and other Baathists, and jihadists led by the Jordanian terrorist, Abu Musab al Zarqawi.

THEY TARGET Coalition forces and Iraqis who work with the Coalition. Their purpose is to drive Americans out and create enough mayhem so they can take over in the vacuum left after a pullout.

Quite a bit of the violence is by followers of the rebel cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, considered an outlaw by peaceable Iraqis. The Journal reports that al-Sadr's followers are mostly unemployed young men who are likely to participate in the political process once they are convinced that America intends to honor its promise to hold elections.

"Al-Sadr himself still needs to be arrested or killed," the newspaper said in a Friday editorial, "but the way to neutralize his support is to show progress toward the January polls."

Violence in Iraq is a major problem and appears to be spreading. It may even get worse before it gets better. But it's important for the American public to understand the real extent of the problem. Putting it in perspective is essential to this nation's ability to provide the political support and staying power needed to prevail.

The opposition in Iraq knows that the United States has a fluency its outcome with more attacks.

That, too, is no surprise. "But," reports the Journal, "what would be truly damaging politically aren't further troubles in Iraq by themselves, but any perception that we aren't really fighting to win."

We wish the other major news media would clean up their act and report the situation in Iraq responsibly. But we aren't holding our breath waiting.

Writers' world will be on parade

By ELISE PATKOTAK

When I was a young girl, my world was fairly small and tightly controlled. Nothing was done without the express written consent of parents, priests and nuns. This led to some very interesting situations in my childhood for both me and some of my neighborhood companions.

For instance, there was the time my friend Grace got appendicitis while we were still in grade school. She wasn't about to tell our nun that she had this pain because she didn't want to miss school. By the time we got out that day, I literally had to help her down the stairs and walk her to her home because the pain had gotten so intense.

A doctor was called, the diagnosis was made, and Grace was told she would have to go into surgery. Except Grace refused to allow anyone to move her out of her house until she saw a priest. And no amount of threats by her parents about the consequences of waiting even five minutes to get to surgery would dissuade her. Finally, her parents had to send for the parish priest to give her a blessing before she'd leave for the hospital.

Then there was the time I won an award from the YWCA for a Voice Of Democracy broadcast speech writing contest. I patkoiak know the exact title of the competition because the award still hangs on a wall in my home. I was thrilled to win until I found out that in order to accept the award I would have to go to a — gasp, horror — Protestant church for the ceremony. I wasn't sure I could do that without risking my immortal soul. And nothing my parents said alleviated my concern.

In total frustration they sent me to our parish priest who assured me I could enter the church and enjoy the dinner without risk. I can't tell you how relieved I was though there was a part of me that still thought the question should have been brooded upstairs to the bishop just to be sure.



Elise Patkotiak



Needless to say, with this type of background, the YWCA was hardly a part of my everyday world when I was young. In fact, I don't think I'd even heard of it prior to going to high school where my world widened to include non-Alaskans.

I can look back at that limited little girl I once was and laugh now. Especially since I've grown up enough to know I can be friendly with all religions without fear of eternal damnation and that the work of the YWCA is in the best tradition of what Christianity should stand for.

Here in Anchorage, the YWCA sponsors programs that run the gamut from helping women deal with their finances to helping mothers and daughters communicate well and avoid the trap of substance abuse. It sponsors programs on women's health and programs that encourage young girls to get into the thick of the technology revolution.

One of the activities I love best is the annual program at the Anchorage Museum of History and Art entitled Alaska Women Writers Reading from Their Work. This year that program is happening Thursday at 7 p.m. And even though I'm not reading this year, I'm excited about the program because each year I've attended I've been pleasantly

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Editor

PETA AND ITS PALS ...

Off base

AH, THOSE WILD and crazy guys over at People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals are all in a tizzy again. Now, the animal rights activists demand that the San Diego Zoo's Wild Animal Park sack Dr. Jim Oosterhuis, a foremost, exotic animal veterinarian.

His crime? Telling the truth about Maegye the elephant, according to a Daily News account.

Oosterhuis was a consultant to the Alaska Zoo in a recent evaluation of the zoo's only pachyderm, and he concluded that the 22-year-old elephant appeared happy. Based on that and other factors, the zoo has decided to make a few changes in her habitat and keep her here.

That decision has thrown those anxious to move Maegye to a warmer climate into a frothing suit.

But animal rights activists were not satisfied to make fools of themselves over Maegye, they also called for one of Alaska's premier woman mushers, DeeDee Jonrowe, to be barred from a four-day series of workshops on the outdoors by Wild Women Unite. The workshops were aimed at teaching women how to enjoy the outdoors.

Jonrowe, a breast cancer survivor and an Alaska icon, holds the fastest women's time in the punishing, 1,100-mile Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. In her career, she has come to exemplify the very best in every aspect of her sport, including dog care. She was scheduled to speak to the group Friday.

Hopefully, such groups as PETA are winning themselves out of business. Alaskans, and everybody else, will be better off

What next?

IS THERE ANYTHING Democrats will not do to help unseat Republican U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski?

The latest attempt began last week when Democrats walking out of a Senate Energy Committee meeting last week to side-track votes on two of the senator's bills.

As the committee was about to vote on the contentious Cape Fox land exchange, Sens. Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico, the committee's ranking Democrat, and Tim Johnson, D-S.D., walked out. That legislation would swap 12,000 acres of federal land at Berners Bay to the Sealaska and Cape Fox Native corporations in exchange for land and mineral rights in the Tongass National Forest.

The walkout quickly drew condemnation. The Daily News reported Oklahoma Republican Sen. Don Nickles as saying, "I can't (ever) remember a walkout so we can't consider a lands bill. This is embarrassing. It's a rule. It's very short-sighted."

Because of the Democrats' childish actions, legislation of importance to Alaskans was derailed, at least temporarily. Again, is there anything Democrats will not do to help unseat Republican U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski?

John Kerry has nowhere left to flop

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

If the election were held today, John Kerry would lose by between 88 and 120 electoral votes. The reason is simple. The central vulnerability of this president — the central issue of this campaign — is the Iraq war. And Kerry has nothing left to say.

Why? Because, until now, he has said everything conceivable regarding Iraq. Having taken every possible position on the war, there is nothing he can say now that is even remotely credible.

If he had simply admitted that he had made a mistake in supporting the war, he might have become an antiwar candidate. But having taken a dozen positions, he has nowhere to go.

He now calls Iraq "the wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time." But, of course, he voted to authorize the war. And shortly after the fall of Baghdad, he emphatically repeated his approval of the war. "It was the right decision to disarm Saddam Hussein. And when the president made the decision, I supported him."

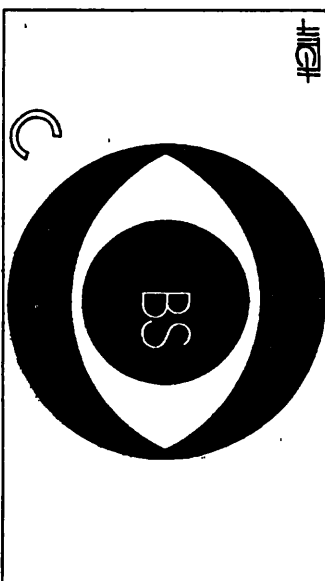
When Don Imus asked him, this week, "Do you think there are any circumstances we should have gone to war in Iraq, any?" Kerry responded: "Not under the current circumstances, no. There are more that I see. I voted based on weapons of mass destruction. The president distorted that." But just last month he said that even if he had known then what he knows now, he would have voted for the war resolution.

Is Iraq part of the war on terrorism or a cynical distraction from it? And even-tything (Bush) did in Iraq, he's going to try to persuade people it has to do with terror, even though everybody here knows that it has nothing whatsoever to do with al Qaeda and everything to do with an agenda that they had preselected.

That was April 2004. Of course, shortly after Sept. 11, Kerry was saying the opposite. "I think we clearly have to keep the pressure on terrorism globally," he said in December 2001. "This doesn't end with Afghanistan by any means. Terrorism is a global menace. It's a scourge. And it is absolutely vital that we continue [with], for instance, Saddam Hussein."

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So then Hussein was part of the war on terrorism — a "for instance" in fighting "terrorism globally." Kerry temporarily returned to that position last week when he marked the 1,000th American death in Iraq by saying the troops have "given their lives on behalf of their country, on behalf of freedom, in the war on terror."

How did Kerry get to this point of total meltdown? He started out his political career voting his conscience on national security issues. During the 1980s he was a consistent, dovish liberal Democrat, pro-nuclear freeze, anti-Star Wars, against the Reagan defense buildup, against the war in Nicaragua. And then he joined the overwhelming majority of his party in voting against the Persian Gulf War.

That turned out to be a mistake. And Kerry suffered for it. The very next year he had to watch as Al Gore, who got the Gulf War right, was chosen for the 1992 Democratic ticket, a spot for which Kerry had been on the short list.

Kerry learned his political lesson. Or thought he did. So when the Iraq war came around, he did not want to be caught on the wrong side of another success. He voted yes.

But then things went wrong both for the war and for him. What did he do? With Howard Dean rocketing toward the Democratic nomination, Kerry played to his deeply antiwar party by

voting against the \$87 billion to fund the occupation.

Two months later, with Saddam Hussein caught and the war looking better, Kerry maneuvered again, aligning himself with "Those who doubted whether Iraq or the world would be better off without Saddam Hussein, and those who believe today that we are not safer with his capture, don't have the judgment to be president or the credibility to be elected president."

Kerry is now back to the "wrong war in the wrong place at the wrong time," a line lifted from Dean himself. So we are not better off with Hussein deposited after all.

These dizzying contradictions — so glaring, so public, so frequent — have gone beyond undermining anything Kerry can now say on Iraq. They have been transmuted into a character issue. When Kerry went off wandering during the Republican convention, Jay Leno noted that even Kerry's hobbies depend on wind direction.

Kerry on the war has become an object not only of derision but of irreconcilable suspicion. What kind of man, aspiring to the presidency, does not know his own mind about the most serious issue of our time?

Charles Krauthammer writes a weekly, nationally syndicated column for the Washington Post. His column is distributed by the Washington Post Writers Group. © Copyright 2004 The Washington Post Co.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Monday, September 20, 2004 **B-5**

K9 UNIT DESERVES . . .

Big howl

POLICE CHIEF Walt Monegan has a special place in his heart for the police dogs and officer handlers in his K9 unit.

After the recent dedication of the Fourth Avenue substation in honor of John Flora, the officer whose shooting death led to use of police dogs here, Monegan recounted a few of the many instances where the dogs have saved lives and countered crime.

Not all the dogs' work has been in catching robbers and rapists. Over the years, members of the K9 unit have found and rescued many people, including a lost Alzheimer's patient wandering in the cold and a young boy buried in a snow berm by a plow.

When convicted killer Gary Newcomb shot and wounded two police officers in a Mountain View barber shop in 1987, the legendary Kahn, a fierce Rottweiler, tracked him down and scooped under a van to apprehend him.

Newcomb was pulled from beneath the vehicle but tried to raise his gun to fire. Kahn grabbed the murderer's arm and dragged it down, making it impossible for him to shoot the officers.

WHEN A cornered criminal lunged at officer handler Harry Hanson with a knife, his dog Baron leaped into the air between them and took the knife himself — in the eye. Fortunately a veterinarian was able to save the eye and the dog later went back on duty.

In 1986, Hanson was shot and killed by a robbery suspect that he, his dog and another team were pursuing. Baron attended Hanson's burial at Fort Richardson and Chief Monegan said the dog whined and scratched lightly at his master's casket, bringing tears to spectators' eyes.

Though they experience sorrow, Monegan said some of the dogs also seem to have a sense of humor. He said he once climbed into his patrol car at headquarters and was startled when a dog growled and threw itself against the window of a cruiser beside him. He said he almost twisted the key off in his car's ignition, when he turned he saw Kahn looking friendly and with a canine version of a smile on his face.

The dogs and handlers of the K9 unit have accomplished great things since the unit was established almost 30 years ago. The unit's cost to the city is virtually nil since the expense of selecting, buying, training and shipping the dogs is borne by Dollars for Dogs, a non-profit group founded by John Flora's widow Brenda Dog health care is donated by veterinarians.

The unit, its dogs and handlers deserve hearty applause and a friendly howl!

Untaxed people want others to pay

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

In last week's column, I reported on the Washington, D.C.-based Tax Foundation study that estimated that 44 percent of income earners will legally have no 2004 federal income tax liability. The study concluded, "When all of the dependents of these income-producing households are counted, there are roughly 122 million Americans — 44 percent of the U.S. population — outside of the federal income tax system."

The Bush administration sees removing the income tax burden on Americans at the lower end of the earnings spectrum — families earning less than \$50,000 a year — as desirable.

When President Reagan successfully got Congress to remove 6 million Americans from the tax rolls, he described his tax reform initiative as one of the proudest achievements of his administration.

At the time, I argued that doing so was nothing to be proud about, and I extend that same criticism to President Bush.

You might ask, "Why?" In general, I've always held that a tax cut for anybody, at any time, for any reason is a good thing because it keeps more of our earnings in our pockets and out of Washington.

But there's a problem. Removing so many Americans from federal income tax liability contributes to the political problem we're witnessing this election, class warfare and the politics of envy.

When 122 million Americans are outside of the federal income tax system, it's like throwing dynamite to our political sharks.

These Americans become a natural spending constituency for big government politicians. After all, if you have no income tax liability, how much do you care about how much Congress spends and the level of taxation?

Political calls for tax cuts fall upon deaf ears. Surveys prove that this Ac-



counting to a Harris Poll taken in June 2003, 51 percent of Democrats thought the tax cuts enacted by Congress were a bad thing, while 16 percent of Republicans thought so.

Among Democrats, 67 percent thought the tax cuts were unfair, while 32 percent of Republicans thought so. When asked whether the \$350 billion tax-cut package will help your family finances, 69 percent of those surveyed said no and 35 percent said yes. Tax cuts to many Americans mean just one thing: They threaten the handouts they receive.

There might be a correction for the political problems caused by large numbers of Americans with zero income-tax liability. But it might be politically incorrect to even mention it. I do not own stock, and hence have no financial stake in Ford Motor Co. Do you think I should have voting rights, or any say so, in the matters of the company? I'm guessing that your answer is no.

So here's my idea. Every American regardless of any other consideration should have one vote in any federal election. Then, every American should get one additional vote for every

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Voice of the Times

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

NEW CONVENTION CENTER A...

Great idea

THE ALASKA Civic and Convention Center proposed by a local developer group could bring a quantum leap in the growth of Anchorage's tourism industry.

And its prospects for approval by voters in next April's municipal election look far better than those for the scheme that went down in flames in the 2002 city election.

The location — between the Alwood and ConocoPhillips buildings and just blocks from the Alaska Center for Performing Arts and the William A. Egan Civic and Convention Center, and close to the downtown hotels — is nearly ideal. The proposal by the J.L. Properties and Venture Development Group was selected last week by a seven-member review team. The group's major investors are Jonathan Rubin, Leonard Hyde, Mark Pfeiffer and Jerry Neeser, all well-known in the Anchorage marketplace.

Mayor Mark Begich says the plan should be much more attractive to voters than the one rejected last time. It includes a specific location for the center, how it would be used, who will pay for it and how the old Egan Center will be utilized.

None of those questions were answered in 2002 and the lack made voters nervous. So did the long list of bond issues that were on the ballot, virtually all went down. The new convention center plan answers all of those questions.

THE NEW FACILITY would enable meetings marketers at the Anchorage Convention & Visitors Bureau to attract gatherings of up to 5,000 people, three times the size that can be accommodated at the Egan Center.

ACVB convention recruiters long have complained that the Egan Center's size has prevented them from approaching large groups, which have expressed strong interest in meeting here, but couldn't be accommodated.

The new center would cost a firm \$83 million — any cost overrun would be borne by the developers — and would be paid for with a 50 percent increase in the hotel and motel bed tax, to 12 percent from 8 percent. The facility would be built and maintained without cost to local property owners.

One thing that should be changed is the presumed requirement that 60 percent of the voters approve. That is an unnecessarily high obstacle that was imposed earlier when the city sold its telephone utility to the ACS group.

Begich said sentiment to reduce the requirement is widespread in the business community and he is considering a ballot item for the same election that would reduce it to 50 percent plus one. We think that's a good idea.

The new convention center would create something like 800 construction jobs and 700 permanent jobs. And since many banquet and meetings jobs are part time, they provide income supplements to people with other jobs, and parents and seniors who don't want to work full-time.

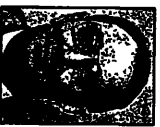
The project is a good one and should move ahead with all due speed.

Goodbye summer, you were just great

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

IF YOU KEEP your eye on the clock next Wednesday morning, you'll be able to observe the exact time that autumn arrives in Alaska. The fall season will not in at 8:30 a.m. a northwest-most when we officially will have summer goodbye. Winter will be three months away — but long before late December, we'll have our full measure of cold and snow — with the first snowfall hereabouts expected about Oct. 15. That's the usual date — unofficially of course.

BEFORE THE SNOW flies, warm congratulations are due the Hotel Captain Cook, which has earned an international salute from Preferred Hotels and Resorts Worldwide. The Cook, one of 120 luxury hotels affiliated under the Preferred Hotel banner,



Tobin

received the group's 2004 award of excellence as Hotel of the Year in the exceptional service category. The award was accepted by Walter Hinkel Jr., president of the Cook, at a conference in London.

Tobin

The award was based on a two-night, three-day inspection of all Preferred Hotels by an independent contractor, using a 1,600-item check-list touching on every aspect of a hotel's operations.

WHILE SPEAKING of hotels, let's also tip the hat to the Hilton Anchorage for keeping alive a bit of our town's storied past. Over the drive-in entrance at the corner of Third Avenue and E Street, the handsome brick facade on two sides displays the "Hilton name. On two others, however, there still remains "Anchorage Westward," the name of the hotel back in the days before the ownership passed first to Western Hotels and in recent years to Hilton. For old timers hereabouts, these little things mean a lot.

ANOTHER THING that means a lot is the 35th anniversary of Anchorage's Sister City relationship with Tromsø, Norway. Over the years since



"I wish you would put your razor away."

that hands-across-the-seas friendship pact was signed, Anchorage has adopted five more Sister Cities: Darwin, Australia, Chitose, Japan, Megadha, Russia, Incheon, South Korea, and Whistler, England. Flights from all those nations will be flying when the Anchorage Sister Cities Commission stages its seventh annual Fall Harvest Festival — a fall celebration scheduled at the 4th Avenue Theatre Oct. 1 from 7:30-10:30 p.m. Tickets are \$30 at the door, and there will be beers by local brewers, food by some of Anchorage's leading restaurants, live music, dancing, and a silent auction.

ELSEWHERE ON OUR international relations front, Canada has opened a full-time consulate office here with Karen Matthews as consul general. She will be assisted by Rudy Bruggeman, the political, economic and public affairs officer. The consulate is located in the Carr-Godtsken Building on K Street, between Third and Fourth avenues.

Canada is Alaska's No. 3 trading partner, trailing only Japan and Korea. Alaska's companies did \$230 million in business with Canada last year, up 49 percent from 2002. Japan is the only other nation with a full-time consulate here.

DEPT. OF MOVING ON: Gene O'Hara, former big man on the Anchorage hospital scene, takes over Oct. 1 as the new chief executive of the Northern Colorado Medical Center in Greeley.

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Colo. O'Hara resigned in April as CEO of Providence Alaska Medical Center and chief operating officer of the Providence Health System in Alaska, leaving to find a similar post close to his family in the Lower 48. With a daughter in Denver, the new assignment fits the bill. He'll be overseeing a 326-bed medical center that is part of Banner Health System, a Phoenix-based non-profit company with 15 hospitals in eight western states.

IN CASE YOU MISSED it elsewhere, let's help spread the word that Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport have a luminous new rest area while waiting between flights. The haven is the Alwood Military Lounge, named in honor of the late editor and publisher of The Anchorage Times, Bob Alwood, who was one of the city's biggest supporters of the armed forces during his 60 years as civic leader. The new lounge — complete with showers, a quiet room, a living room with wide-screen TV, a kitchen, and a children's playroom — features free Internet connections for service personnel to send and receive e-mail. The Alwood Foundation was the major financial backer of the lounge, located near the baggage claim area in the airport's new Concourse C, is operated by the Armed Services YMCA of Alaska.

DOING THEIR THING: John Shively, Holland America Line representative here, has been re-elected president of the Resource Development Council. Members of the RDC evidently are a happy bunch. — Mark Hanley of Anadarko Petroleum also won re-election as the council's senior vice president. Mary Ann Paepe, vice president of external affairs for Alaska Communications Systems, is the new chairman-elect of the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce. She will move up to the chamber's top board position next September and will become the fourth woman to head the chamber since its foundation in 1916. The others: the late Eugene Alwood, 1968-86; Judy Brady, 1991-92; and Sue Landford, 1994-95.

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOSIN
Senior Editor

TIME FOR A DEEP BREATH IN...

Web flap

BOTH SIDES in the dispute between the staff of Sen. Lisa Murkowski's campaign and schools Superintendent Carol Comeau need to take a deep breath and a time-out.

Some of Murkowski's staff should be writing on a blackboard. "The School District's employee list is not to be used for political purposes." And Comeau should be required to stand in the corner of her office until she realizes her angry response to the problem was over the top and inappropriate.

The district Web page was used by the Murkowski staff this week to send all district employees an e-mail letter containing an endorsement of her candidacy by a former Anchorage Education Association president.

Comeau was furious because the Web page states: "Please limit your e-mail to official school business. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in the loss of access to ASD e-mail accounts."

Seeing that prominently displayed caution should have caused the Murkowski staff to at least request permission from the district for the e-mailing. District policy on such things would almost certainly have ruled out giving approval.

THE MESSAGE was drafted and sent while Murkowski was in Washington attending the closing portion of this year's congressional session. Her staff apparently did so on its own initiative and will almost certainly be hearing more from her on the subject in the near future — if they haven't already.

But Comeau's response included both fury about the use made of the list — apparently without Murkowski's knowledge or approval (Murkowski reportedly is furious with her staff as well) — and a political statement of her own about alleged illegal use of state computers by Republican state Chairman Randy Ruehrich.

In bygone days, when corporal punishment was allowed, Comeau would have been lectured about superintendent's who stir the political pot while dealing with school issues and been given a rap on the knuckles with a ruler.

But times have changed and a timeout will have to do.

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Job well done

Congratulations for a job well done to the Armed Services YMCA of Alaska for the world-class military lounge at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport.

From the battlefields of the Civil War where it first provided care and comfort to soldiers on both sides, the YMCA continues that proud heritage, providing a welcome respite and tribute for all traveling military members and their families who day-in and day-out make enormous sacrifices so that we may continue to enjoy the freedoms we cherish.

Bob Atwood, being the huge supporter of the military that he was, would be most proud of that continuing support.

While many groups and folks came together to make this happen, it is appropriate to recognize a few key founders. Ted Stevens, the Atwood Foundation (Ed Raamunson, Nancy Harbour, David Tobin, Gloria Allen and Bill Tobin), along with the foundation executive, Bob Reeves, Mort Plumb, the airport director, Barbara and Larry Cash and their staff at Kim Architects, Stephanie LaFleur, and last, but not least, the volunteers and staff of the ASYMCA of Alaska, who live their motto, "Serving those who serve America."

Tom Morgan
Eagle River

Teach a man...

Be advised that one solution to the genocide occurring in the Sudan would be for the U.S. government to take the AK-47s and tons of ammo we found in Iraq and give them to the people being killed by the well-armed government-backed Arab militia, so that they can protect themselves.

Be a bodyguard and you can protect a man and his family for a week and risk getting killed. Give that man an AK47 and a thousand rounds of ammo and he can protect himself and family for a very long time and you can safely go home. I am sure that these people in the Sudan appreciate the meaning of the Second Amendment.

Michael L. Stouanoff
Anchorage

Letters to The Times



Seems logical

The controversy concerning the judicial committee recommendations forwarded to the governor certainly indicates a situation in which common sense has not prevailed.

The constitutional requirements governing judicial selection procedures were set down a half-century ago. They stipulated that two or more candidates for judgeship be forwarded to the governor for his selection.

At present, the population of the state is at least five times what it was at the time of the framing of the constitution — and the number of lawyers sometimes seems to be 20 times what it was in the 1950s.

Considering the tremendous increase in the population pool, it does not seem unreasonable to me for the governor to want an appropriately larger group from which to choose. The "two or more" stipulation certainly appears to allow such an increase in the number of recommended qualified candidates. If the committee can choose to present three names, it can choose to present six or nine.

In any case, a compromise makes more sense than a turf war built on an imaginary constitutional crisis. The unpopularity of some of the governor's actions is not a valid reason to arbitrarily block his every move.

Don Neal
Anchorage

Tony's friends

You can tell a lot about a politician from who he hangs around with. Take

Tony Knowles, for instance. Last month, while he was furiously pandering to Alaska vets for their votes, he brought in two Democrats he thought would help his cause.

One was failed Georgia Sen. Max Cleland, whose constituents booed him from office in 2002. Cleland initially ran as a staunch conservative, not unlike what Tony is doing, yet voted with Dischele's Democrat obstructionists 80 percent of the time — hardly a conservative record. Cleland strenuously opposes job creation here in Alaska with his opposition to opening ANWR.

Tony also brought Bill Clinton's favorite four-star general into town for an appearance. Wesley Clark in 1992 was the general who decided that the posse comitatus prohibition against using military force against civilians during peacetime didn't apply to the Branch Davidians at Waco and provided armor and a battle plan to Bill Clinton and Janet Reno, resulting in the deaths of nearly 90. Clerk also strongly opposes opening ANWR.

Cleland demonstrated to his constituents that he was not to be trusted while in office. He ran as a conservative and then voted as a Dischele Democrat while in the Senate. Can we expect anything else from Tony?

Alex Ginnare
Anchorage

A fun...

Best part of my day is reading your editorials. Finally, a staff that makes sense and makes me proud to be who I am. A Republican who loves his country, especially Alaska, and his president.

When I read your comments I find myself smiling, my heart hurting a little, or swelling with pride in community, but never the anger the liberal Salt Lake Tribune editorial page causes. I wouldn't allow it on the premises except my wife says the coupons more than pay for the subscription cost!

God bless you guys and please keep your insightful and honest comments coming.

Dennis Bleszard
Salt Lake City

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

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OPEN PRIMARIES ARE...

A bad idea

YOU HAVE TO wonder what it is about the United States Constitution that so bedeviles our friends on the left, and the undying effort to return Alaska to a so-called "open" primary illustrates the point.

Each political party has a right under the Constitution to pick its own candidates for office. Republicans, despite the incessant whining from the left, have opted for a closed primary in Alaska. If you want to help select the Republican candidates for office in Alaska anyway, you can register as a Republican, or nonpartisan or undeclared.

Why should a Green Party voter or a Democrat have anything to say about the GOP's candidates? It is akin to your neighbors deciding for you what you will grill tonight.

Open primaries, where voters can cast their vote for anybody on the ballot, are an affront to the party system.

We have a better idea. Why not end the charade of "undeclared" and "nonpartisan" voter registrations in Alaska — but allow individuals to register to vote as members of "no party"?

That way, they would still be registered voters — but without being affiliated with a particular party. When primary elections roll around, the "no party" voters stay home — and those with party affiliations would go to the polls and vote for candidates in whichever party they happen to be registered. The "no party" crowd would vote in the general election. That would ensure that only voters registered in a party would choose that party's candidates for the general election.

Alaska could also go with another option and drop the primary election altogether, leaving it to parties to select their candidates by other methods — at a state convention, for example. That, however, is particularly irksome to the left. But either way, perhaps it would put an end to the embarrassing attacks on any party's constitutional right to pick its own candidates.

Dark nights return

THE DARKNESS is back. For the next month or so we'll see nights that look like the inside of a coal mine. The shortest days and longest nights don't arrive until December, but the time before the ground is covered by snow is always the darkest part of the year.

Snow is a wonderful reflector of light and the nights will become much brighter when the ground freezes and is covered by white, usually in mid- to late October. And though snow does it best, even frost reflects light and can diminish anxiety about the advancing season.

There are several reasons why people scan the sky for signs of snow as the year progresses — among them a desire to go sledding or snowmobiling — but the day-to-day advantage of the white stuff is the light it brings into our lives.

The time for a serious snowfall is not yet, but newcomers can rest assured that it is coming.

Cigarette tax hike would invite crime

By TOM BRENNAN

The dollar-a-pack hike in cigarette taxes proposed by Mayor Mark Begich could create a career opportunity for criminals. Boosting the tax on smokes would provide some benefits — like creating a disincentive for teen-age tobacco addicts and reducing the tax burden on property owners — but it may have a big downside.

For one thing, it would increase the profit on black market cigarettes by 10 bucks a carton. And since a 40-buck carton can hold 40,000 cartons, the additional profit on such an illicit load, just from the mayor's increase, would be nearly a half-million dollars. Alaska has the second-highest per capita rate of cigarette consumption in the nation, behind only Kentucky. So there is big money to be made here for those in the smuggling line of work.

The retail cost here of a 10-pack carton of Marlboros — the world's most popular cigarette — is about \$35, most of it taxes. Presumably the Begich tax would make it \$45.

The state tax on cigarettes is \$1.60 and Anchorage adds 30 cents. The federal tax is 39 cents. The mayor's proposed tax boost would bring total taxes here to \$3.29 a pack, a huge incentive for crooks who are able to smuggle in untaxed cigarettes.

The taxes on a Brennan

container full of smokes would be almost \$1.6 million, on goods that cost them around \$580,000.

Boosting butts, including tax-avoided cigarettes and counterfeit goods, are becoming a significant national problem. Law enforcement people are seeing increasing signs that organized crime and terrorist groups are moving away from drug smuggling — where the penalties are high — and into the tobacco black market, where penalties are low and profits are high and getting higher.

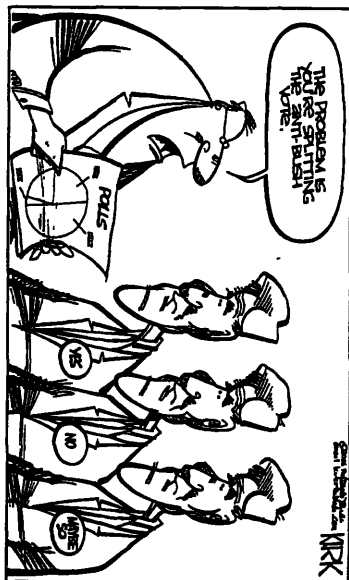
In parts of the country where cigarettes are tax-free, mainly on Indian reservations, some traffickers are filling 747s with cheap cancer sticks and flying them to destinations all over the country, where they are sold for big bucks.

Nobody knows the full extent of the cigarette black market in Alaska, but it does exist, especially in the Bush. There have been a number of arrests in rural Alaska for bootlegging butts. In some cases the smugglers are importing counterfeit smokes from Russia, and they are packaged to look like the real thing.

The counterfeiters can, for instance, provide cartons and packages of cigarettes that look exactly like Marlboros and bear the phony tax stamp of your choice, even the stamps look like the real thing. The tobacco doesn't taste like anything from Marlboro country, more like something you might find in your yard.

The mayor's plan, as it stands, does not contain provisions for enforcement, and those are unlikely. There is only one enforcement officer for tobacco law anywhere in the state. He works for the Alaska Department of Revenue and also pursues gambling violations. Even drug dogs couldn't handle the problem, they can be trained to sniff out smuggled tobacco, but few have been.

Alaska is a big smuggling state. Shipments of illegal goods arrive both through Anchorage International Airport and the Port of Anchorage. And many smaller communities are served directly by fishing vessels that come north loaded with cigarettes and return



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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Thursday, September 16, 2004 **B-7**
WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Staff Editor

KERRY CLUELESS AS SANITY RETURNS ON ...

Gun rights

JOHN KERRY SAID the other day that he has been a hunter all his life, but never felt the need to take an assault rifle with him. He might have added that he never took a bowling ball, either.

His comment was irrelevant to the public debate over enactment of the ban on some so-called assault rifles. Few hunters believe an assault rifle is an appropriate weapon for hunting, being that true assault rifles are fully automatic. The guns, illegal for hunting nationwide, just aren't designed to be used in legally and ethically harvesting moose, caribou, deer or other large game animals.

The guns banned by the poorly crafted and arbitrary federal law were semi-automatic rifles with large-capacity magazines. Or they were shotguns. Or they had vertical pistol grips. Or this. Or that. Other, nearly identical rifles and shotguns with the same actions were not affected. Go figure.

The just-enacted statute also disallowed high-capacity, detachable magazines, so the value to the public presumably was that criminals would have to stop shooting to reload frequently. Some in Washington, D.C., must consider the reloading requirement a deterrent to crime, though such an impact is questionable at best, a fanciful thought, at worst.

The weapons affected by the law, like the AR-15 assault-style rifle, primarily are of interest to gun collectors and target shooters. The nation has about 3 million gun collectors, most of them relatively affluent people who invest substantial sums in their collections and displays.

And though "hunters" like John Kerry may not be aware of it, the nation also has nearly 16 million active target shooters, most of them quite honest, people who enjoy firing at targets, people who wouldn't consider using their guns to shoot their neighbors or pull a bank heist.

TARGET SHOOTING

is a very enjoyable recreational activity and for many it is a competitive sport. In Anchorage and the Mat-Su area alone, hundreds of shooters participate in weekly leagues. Most use shotguns to break clay targets in events such as skeet, trap shooting and sporting clays. Many others fire rifles and pistols on ranges designed to meet their needs.

It's difficult not to wonder what kind of hunter might know so little about guns that he would make a statement like Kerry's. It's also difficult not to wonder about a presidential candidate who has so little regard for the rights of Americans that he believes he can pick and choose, on the basis of hunting, which Second Amendment rights can be exercised.

The ban on semi-automatic, assault-style rifles and the attendant prohibition on "high-capacity" magazines were the result of a hysterical Congress goaded on by a liberal president who would have banned all guns to appease his friends on the far left, if possible. It was a sterling example of government capriciousness and abuse of the Constitution.

Beigh: New convention center a winner

By MAYOR MARK BEIGH

Seven hundred new permanent, year-round jobs for Anchorage. Eight hundred construction jobs. Ninety-three additional nights in Anchorage hotels by visitors who will eat in city restaurants and shop in our stores.

That's the tip of the iceberg in economic benefits for Anchorage if voters in April approve plans for a new downtown civic and convention center. And it won't cost local property taxpayers a dime.

I believe a new center also will boost our community's morale, creating a new sense of excitement about Anchorage's unlimited future opportunities.

"Economic development" is a favorite phrase of politicians. I used it frequently myself while running for mayor last year. One of the most promising economic development opportunities for both Anchorage and Alaska is the visitor industry.

Last year, our state enjoyed the economic benefits of more than 16 million visitors to Alaska, with about 800,000 of them visiting Anchorage.

A growing segment of the visitor industry is convention-goers who often bring their families, extend their stays after the convention is over, Beigh



and use other services, from dry cleaners to hairdressers. Conventions generate about \$77 million a year for our city, with out-of-state delegates spending an average of \$830 per day, year-round.

Yet, we're missing millions of dollars more in convention trade because of inadequate space in the Egan Civic & Convention Center and other existing facilities. Our Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau identified more than 450 potential conventions of 2,500 to 5,000 delegates that would consider Anchorage, if only we had adequate space.

Our existing cramped facilities also make it difficult to house home-grown events, from the Great Alaska Sports-



man Show to the boat show. Large groups frequently have to split their meetings between various locations and local groups too often get bumped by national conventions.

That's why last February we asked developers to use their creativity to propose a new civic and convention center. After months of careful review, we selected the best proposal.

The new civic and convention center proposed by Ventures Development and J1 Properties would be located on the current state-owned parking lot between the Alwood and ConocoPhillips buildings downtown.

It was selected for three reasons. First, it's affordable. The total cost is \$83 million, nearly \$10 million less than a proposal Anchorage voters failed to support two years ago. It won't cost Anchorage property taxpayers a dime.

It would be financed by a 4 percent increase in Anchorage's accommodation tax, currently 8 percent. If Anchorage voters approve in April, the hotel tax will increase to 12 percent — still below the national average — with the additional revenue paying for construction and operation of this center and new downtown parking.

Anchorage's hotel/motel tax helps pay for essential public services and continues to grow significantly from just \$18 million in 1980 to nearly \$11 million today.

The second reason this proposal was selected is the many assets it provides: 50,000 square feet of exhibit space, a 31,000-square-foot ballroom, breakout rooms totaling 12,000 square feet, and additional downtown parking. Compare that to the Egan Center, with just 19,000 square feet.

This center connects well to Town Square, the Performing Arts Center, the Egan Center and other downtown amenities desired by convention goers — hotels, restaurants, shopping. It fully utilizes the Egan Center, located just two blocks away through covered walkways.

The third reason this proposal was selected is because Anchorage can have a new, easily needed convention center in a timely manner.

Once a development agreement between the city and developers is completed within the next few weeks, the Anchorage Assembly will be asked to approve a ballot question for next April's city election. If voters approve the hotel tax increase, the developers will proceed to detailed design. Construction would begin in the spring of 2006, with the first conventions booked for late summer or fall 2008.

Simply put, a new Anchorage civic and convention center is affordable. It will provide residents hundreds of new jobs. It won't cost Anchorage property taxpayers a dime. And it is necessary for our community and state.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

STAIN OFFICER'S LEGACY IS ...

Canine cops

OFFICER JOHN FLORA died young, but his death brought an important change to the Anchorage Police Department.

Flora was shot to death on a September night in 1976 while investigating a burglary at a drug addiction treatment center in downtown Anchorage. The burglar was trying to steal methadone, a synthetic drug used to treat heroin addicts.

Flora was an advocate of using dogs in situations just like the one in which he lost his life. Had he been able to send a trained animal into the darkened clinic to sniff out the waiting burglar and help apprehend him, the officer probably would not have died that night.

After his death, Flora's widow, Brenda, launched a campaign to raise money for a canine unit within the Anchorage Police Department. That became the Dollars for Dogs movement and the department today is home to eight highly trained dogs and their officer handlers, with whom the animals live.

Chief Walt Monegan notes that the only cost to the department for the program is essentially the officers' salaries and food for the animals. The cost of buying, training and bringing the dogs to Alaska is borne by Dollars for Dogs, which has raised nearly \$1 million for the purpose. And the animals' health care is donated by local veterinarians.

THE DOGS — currently all German shepherds and Belgian Malinois — are used to search for weapons, drugs and explosives, as well as to check darkened buildings for hiding criminals and find lost people. The number of lives they have saved is impossible to determine, but it would warm John Flora's heart to see them at work.

Among others with hearts warmed by the animals are Anchorage schoolchildren, who are often visited by members of APD's K-9 unit for community relations demonstrations. The children understand the seriousness and risks of the police dogs' mission. Two students, Kelly Redick of Goldenview Middle School and Samantha McNelly of Rogers Park Elementary, launched their own fund-raising campaigns and brought in enough to buy two bullet-proof vests for APD animals.

In one public demonstration at the ConocoPhillips Atrium, a woman watched the dogs perform, petted each one, then stepped to the donation table and put a \$5,000 gift on her Visa card.

The contributions of John Flora and his widow were recognized last Wednesday when Mayor Mark Begich and Monegan dedicated the police substation inside Fire Station No. 1, at Fourth Avenue and C Street, in Officer Flora's honor.

John Flora's death at age 32 put a heavy burden on his family and his colleagues in 1976, but his legacy to his department and the city is permanent and appropriate.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Doctors inspected remote places

By ELISE PATKOTAK

About a month ago, I wrote a column in which I detailed my growing realization that I needed to either get control of my weight or I would not be able to fulfill my life's goal of spending all of my niece's inheritance before I die.

After much thought, a lot of Internet research, and a couple of bags of potato chips, I finally decided that a gastric bypass was the only solution left to me. Armed with the support of the many doctors in this community who helped to keep me alive until I reached this decision, I started on the long path to surgery.

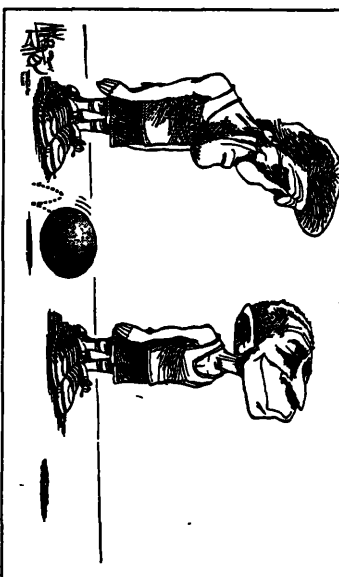
Once you've been accepted for this surgery, you have to undergo a whole battery of tests to determine that you will probably not die during the operation, thereby ruining the doctor's track record. You also, for some reason, need to prove you are relatively sane.

I figured unless you knew my relatives, you would not be able to determine that I was, in fact, sane compared to them. I wasn't sure my insurance company would pay for me to bring a psychiatrist to the Coast to observe a family dinner in order to verify this information.

Luckily, the person evaluating my sanity thought that my little message of four parrots, a cockatiel and a nervous little dog was a positive moment in my life and provided me with a reason to live.

Which is true insofar as I am afraid to die and leave them behind with the house because the birds for sure won't take the dog for the walks he likes so, I ended by on the sane thing.

Little did I know that would be the least of the tests I would have to endure. Prior to this surgery, the doctors apparently have determined that they want to inspect every inch of a person's body, both inside and out. The outside part isn't too onerous. But let me tell you that they wanted to inspect inside parts



BOUNCE

of me that I had no idea were accessible short of an autopsy. And then, when I found out how they were accessible, I thought an autopsy was the easier way to go.

So I drank chink for an upper GI series. And I had an echocardiogram which involved lying on my side watching as my heart beat on a monitor nearby. It seemed like such a small muscle for such a big task. On a day-to-day basis you don't think of each beat, your heart has to take to keep you going. When you're lying on a bed watching it beat, you find yourself becoming a silent if nervous cheerleader. "C'mon heart! C'mon heart! Beat again, beat again! Yes, heart!"

But perhaps the most disconcerting moment in the whole pre-op process occurred when the pulmonary specialist informed me that I had, and I quote, "inadequate sleep hygiene." It was enough to make me want to crawl into a hole somewhere and thank God my mother was no longer around to hear those words. Inadequate sleep hygiene? How horrible. Except for the fact that I didn't have a clue what that was.

Turns out it means I don't go to sleep and get up the same time every day and therefore I throw my biorhythms off kilter. To be honest, if biorhythms were

the only thing off kilter in my life, I wouldn't have been in his office in the first place.

So I think back to the surgeon to confirm that, in fact, I was a candidate for surgery as soon as I got that little sleep problem in hand. I thought I'd been through the worst the process had to offer at this point. I'd been pricked, prodded, stuck, thumped and turned upside down and shook to see if any last shred of dignity had been somehow overlooked in the testing. What could possibly be harder?

Well, the next step was to get approval for the surgery that was listed right in my little booklet as an accepted procedure. I laugh now at the naivety of the person I was back then. A person not yet battle hardened from traversing the road to getting my insurance to actually approve a procedure I qualified for and which they specifically included as a benefit.

Next time — insurance companies are they really Darth Vader's last stronghold?

Elise Patkotak, an Anchorage free-lance writer and author of *Parallel Logic*, a humorous look back at her 25 years in Barrow, lives in Anchorage and owns Precious Cargo Ltd., a writing/graphics company.

The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Tuesday, September 14, 2004 **B-5**

CONSTITUTIONAL DELEGATES . . .

Now there are 5

THE RANKS OF those who wrote the Alaska Constitution thinned again with the death on Sept. 5 of the Rev. Maynard Landberg. Only five remain among the 55 men and women who gathered at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks during the winter of 1955-56 to create the document on which statehood was built.

The Rev. Mr. Landberg was a school teacher and missionary who came to Alaska in 1946 at Yakutat and later spent 20 years in Unalakleet, where he founded Covenant High School. He died at the age of 83 in Westminster, Colo.

Surviving delegates, who were chosen to serve at the constitutional convention in one of the crucial territorial elections that eventually led to statehood, are George Sundberg, Burke Riley, Victor Fischer, John B. Coghill, and Seaborn J. Buckalew Jr.

The constitution the delegates wrote was for a state that was not yet a reality. But the voters of the territory approved it at a 1956 election, and the fact that it was in place — and ready to be implemented — played a significant role in helping convince Congress that Alaska was prepared for statehood.

Under provisions outlined in the constitution, voters in 1958 ratified the Alaska Statehood Act as passed by Congress and elected in advance those who would serve in political offices once statehood was approved. President Dwight D. Eisenhower made it all official with a proclamation admitting Alaska to the Union as the 49th State on Jan. 3, 1959.

Phony charges

YOU ALMOST have to feel sorry for those Washington, D.C., Democrats who now are resorting to hypocrisy in their efforts to unseat Sen. Lisa Murkowski to help regain a Senate majority.

The campaign of Senate hopeful Tony Knowles, run by a Washington insider, says Murkowski received "over \$100,000 from companies that send U.S. jobs overseas."

It failed to mention that it has received more than \$20,000 from those very same companies — that the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee — the outfit that has given the Alaska Democratic Party more than \$1.3 million, the same outfit running ads on Knowles' behalf — has pocketed \$1.5 million from the companies it now castigates for sending jobs out of the United States.

The Washington Democrats also conveniently forget that their vice presidential candidate, John Edwards, has sent his millions overseas.

If phony charges are the best the Democrats can muster, the nation and Alaska are better off without them in leadership positions.

Kerry went to war — but that's all

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

The Republicans got a bounce out of their convention. The Democrats did not. Why? Elementary. The Republicans had something to say. The Democrats did not. Something always beats nothing.

The Democrats purposely chose a candidate with a 22-year history in elective office entirely barren of any distinction. Can you name a single significant bill that bears John Kerry's mark? A single important speech? A single legislative achievement? A single idea of any kind associated with Kerry's name?

The Democrats chose a candidate known for political calculation, a talent for misdirection and an unwavering dedication to averting constantly to avoid political risk. In other words, they chose a cipher.

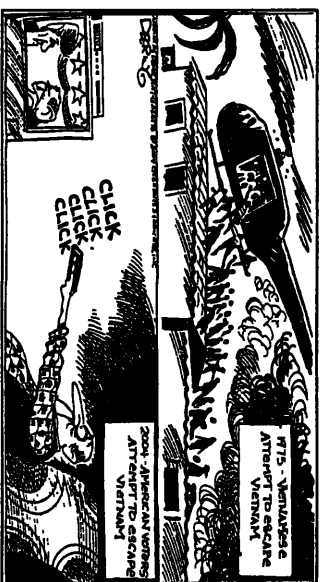
Not a bad strategy when the news for the Bush administration — the Iraq insurgency, Abu Ghraib, the Sept. 11 hearings — was awful. Pick a cipher and make this a referendum on the president. A plausible idea, but it did leave everything up to chance. Worse, it leaves everything up to the other side.

How did the Democrats spend the four days at their convention? Saluting the Swift boats. Why? Because John Kerry has taken so many positions on Iraq and the war on terrorism that he has nothing believable or useful left to say. All he can say is "Vietnam."

In the bizarre midnight rant that he gave in Springfield, Ohio, minutes after the president's acceptance speech at the Republican convention, he went into a long denunciation of all that's gone wrong in Iraq. One waited for his alternative policy. What did he offer? "I defended this country as a young man, and I will defend it as president of the United States of America."

Patience. Douglas MacArthur. Curtis LeMay and George Wallace could have made an equal claim. What kind of qualification is that for the presidency? At their convention, the Republicans had something to say. It was simple and clear. There is a war on, and we are tough enough to deal with it. Not because of what we did 35 years ago but because of how we have dealt with our various enemies for the past three years.

Now, some people will weigh the re-



sults of these three years and approve. Others will not. But at least this is a case — a plausible claim that bears scrutiny and debate.

John McCain gave a serious and sober defense of the Iraq war on grounds of "realism" — the prudential grounds that with the sanctions on Saddam Hussein collapsing, the choice was not between war and some ineffectual peaceful status quo but between war and a hugely unstable and gathering threat.

Three months later President Bush gave the other grounds, the "sheer rationality for war." In an argument of a length and coherence exceedingly rare in a convention speech, he gave an elaborate defense of democratization as the only serious answer to the nihilism festering in a repressed and oppressed Middle East — a nihilism that exploded upon us on Sept. 11.

You can take that argument or leave it. But there are arguments, ideas that inform policy. "I was a war hero" is a non-sequitur that only a party plagued with pessimism for the past 30 years could imagine as a convincing rationale for leadership.

The only Republican mauler was Zell Miller. Not because he was over the top. He was. But so what? No political convention is complete without at least one over-the-top speech. Bill Clinton's Boston address featured a hilarious passage professing the utmost respect for Republicans, pointing out that Republi-

can merely have a different worldview than we. But to throw windows and airplanes into the snow — while taking their lunch money so the rich can have larger yachts. We are all patriots, Clinton explained generally. We just have different political opinions.

The real problem with Miller was that he overblowned Vice President Cheney's speech, which should have been that night's centerpiece. The Cheney speech was brilliant, a surgical deconstruction of John Kerry delivered with a serene calm, the preeminent restraint of a chief pathologist's report at Hospital Grand Rounds.

Will the bounce last? Undoubtedly not. The Bush lead will narrow. But it will not be Kerry doing the narrowing. It will be the world. Bad news is always out there. In the middle of a maddening economic recovery, there is always bad news. And the fighting in Iraq will continue to haunt the presidency.

Bush will slide. Kerry will surely fight, but he will mostly fail. He has become a spectator. This election was and remains a referendum on Bush. That's how the Democrats wanted it.

Charles Krauthammer writes a weekly, nationally syndicated column for the Washington Post. His column is distributed by the Washington Post Writers Group. © Copyright 2003 The Washington Post Co.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

KERRY SHOULD ANSWER A...

Simple question

WHY DOESN'T JUST one member of the high-powered Washington press corps ask Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry a simple question about his Vietnam war medals? The question is this: "Senator, did you spend even a single night in the hospital as a result of the wounds you received and for which you won three Purple Heart decorations?"

All kinds of allegations are being made that Kerry claimed battle injuries that were insignificant and perhaps even contrived. Most of those who are wounded in battle require medical attention beyond the Band-Aid variety. Many require hospital attention.

Former Sen. Bob Dole, still crippled as the result of combat wounds suffered in Italy in World War II, said he was unaware that Sen. Kerry is receiving any disability benefits for his Vietnam injuries.

Kerry could lay these concerns to rest by detailing the severity of his wounds. Won't any reporter on the campaign trail ask the question?

On the other hand, the fact is that they may never have the chance.

According to the Washington Times reporter accompanying Kerry's campaign trips here and there across the land, the Democratic nominee has not taken a single question from the press since Aug. 9. Then, he took only eight questions. His last full-fledged press conference was on Aug. 2 — and then he took only two questions.

This guy is unbelievable.

One for Knowles

SENATE HOPEFUL They Knowles has yet to distance himself from his party's presidential nominee, a dip-dip-ping liberal who, for personal political gain, alienated Vietnam veterans in 1971 before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

That is odd. After all, Knowles is a candidate who proudly uses his Vietnam veteran status as a political keystone. His refusal to speak out against Kerry must be causing heartburn among the 75,000 veterans in Alaska. He is trying to woo Kerry's lackluster 20-year record in the Senate would be enough for most to reject him out of hand, but if Knowles cannot bring himself to stand against the man perhaps most responsible for having Vietnam veterans labeled "baby killers," how can veterans believe him when he says he'll stand up for them?

That is a tough question reporters in this campaign have failed to ask. If they ever get beyond "What is your favorite color?" we would like to see this question asked and answered: "Gov. Knowles, who will get your vote for president in the general election?"

The answer would be illuminating.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Staff editor

Monday, September 13, 2004 B-5

Income inequality: fact and fiction

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

Last month, the U.S. Bureau of the Census reported its findings on income and poverty. Median real income remained constant between 2002 and 2003 at \$43,000, the official poverty rate rose slightly from 12.1 percent to 12.6 percent for a total of 36 million Americans, poverty rates by race remained unchanged at 8 percent among whites, blacks 24 percent and Hispanics 22 percent.

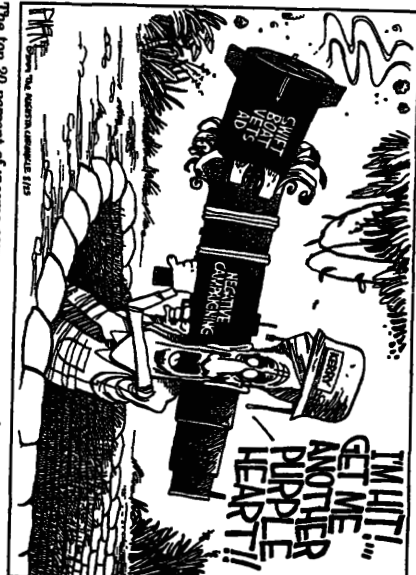
Dr. Daniel H. Weinberg, Bureau of Census division chief, added that income inequality remained unchanged with the lowest 20 percent of households (\$18,000 and below) earning 3.5 percent of national income and the highest 20 percent (\$86,900) about 50 percent.

The poverty report gives vice-presidential hopeful Sen. John Edwards a little fodder for his "Two Americas" stump speech. That's the one where he says, "There's one America that does the work, another America that reaps the reward. One America that pays the taxes, another America that gets the tax breaks."

This is demagoguery and unduly exaggerated dishonesty that can only appeal to the uneducated and ignorant. Let's look at who doesn't pay taxes. According to a study done by Scott Hodge, president of the Washington, D.C.-based Tax Foundation, and his colleagues, 41 percent of whites, 56 percent of blacks, 69 percent of American Indians and Aleut Natives, and 40 percent of Asians and Pacific Islanders will have no 2004 federal income tax liability.

The Tax Foundation study concludes, "When all of the dependents of these income-producing households are counted, there are roughly 122 million Americans — 44 percent of the U.S. population — outside of the federal income tax system. Who does pay federal income taxes?"

The Tax Foundation study concludes, "When all of the dependents of these income-producing households are counted, there are roughly 122 million Americans — 44 percent of the U.S. population — outside of the federal income tax system. Who does pay federal income taxes?"



The top 20 percent of income earners pay 80 percent, and the top 50 percent pay 96.6 percent of total federal income taxes. Given these figures about who does and does not pay federal income taxes, what are we to make of John Edwards' stump speech?

Here's right in one sense: One group of Americans — those at the top — work and pay virtually all federal income taxes, and another group — those at the bottom — work and pay little or no federal income taxes.

There's another issue about income inequality. If it's your vision that out there somewhere there's a pile of money to be divided among Americans, the reason the top fifth of Americans have much more than the bottom fifth is that they get to the pile of money first, and took an unfair share.

Justice, of course, would require that their ill-gotten gains be confiscated and redistributed to their rightful owners. But in a free society, income is mostly determined by one's ability and willingness to produce goods and services that society has follow man.

The top fifth of income earners (earnings greater than \$84,000) are not only more productive and have higher skills and education than the bottom fifth of

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BILL J. ALLEN
Editor

AN EVEN BIGGER CROSSING THAN ...

Knik Arm

THOSE NAVSAVERS who debunk the idea of building a bridge across Knik Arm, connecting Anchorage with the southern end of the Mat-Su area, keep overlooking that more extensive spans exist all over America. All over the world, in fact.

And there's another one on the horizon that should excite all of those who love to travel in Italy.

Consider, please, a bridge over the Strait of Messina, that stretch of water that separates the eastern tip of Sicily from the toe of mainland Italy. For generations, Italians have dreamed of a link between the two Sannos, admittedly, have cursed the idea, but it has prevailed.

The Los Angeles Times, in a report from the Sicilian town of Torre Faro, says Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has plans for a \$7.5 billion bridge over the strait. It would be the longest suspension bridge in the world, 2,065 miles with a central span of nearly 11,000 feet.

The world's longest suspension bridge, the Times says, is the Akashi Kaikyo, which opened in Japan in 1998 and has a central span of more than 6,500 feet.

For this new bridge, plans have been drawn, bids are out, and construction is scheduled to begin at the end of next year. If all goes well, construction is scheduled to be completed in 2012.

THE BRIDGE would be supported at each end by two steel towers the height of the Empire State Building and each weighing 56,000 tons. The report said one tower would be erected near Villa San Giovanni in Calabria, on the Italian mainland, and the other at Torre Faro, just north of Messina, the main city near the site in Sicily.

"Every year," the newspaper said, "thousands of cars, trucks and people take ferries across the strait between the south-eastern mainland and Sicily, through waters churning with strong currents, whirlpools and blustering winds."

The trip is normally about 20 minutes and can be quite pleasant, but during the busiest times, the wait can grow to an hour or more. Ferries have to be dismantled, loaded onto the boats and reassembled on the other side, a process that takes 2 1/2 hours and makes the journey impossible for high-speed trains.

But critics and doomayers abound when it comes to the bridge.

They cite earthquake risks, potential cost overruns and a host of other reasons — including harm to the environment and to fish and wildlife — why the project cannot and should not be approved.

Sounds like what we hear in Alaska these days about the Knik Arm crossing.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

A half a century of building Anchorage

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

LET'S NOT LET another minute pass without saluting Brady Construction Co., this year celebrating its 50th anniversary. The company was founded by the late Ken Brady and, since his death in 1992, has been operated in a sterling fashion by his son, Mike and Tim. Mike is chairman of the board and vice president for finance, administration and legal affairs. Tim is president and the man in charge of construction, bids and estimates. The senior Brady, as many may recall, served as a Republican member of the state House of Representatives in the 1967 and 1968 sessions. His brother, Carl Brady Sr., the founder and retired CEO of Era Aviation, served in the state House in 1965-66 and in the state Senate from 1967-68.

A 40TH ANNIVERSARY salute is due for Dick Sanchez and his Arctic Road Runner restaurants, celebrating four decades in business as Anchorage's "Local Burgers."



Dick Sanchez

He first opened shop in a trailer on Sept. 4, 1964, at the State Fair Grounds in Tobin Palmer — and re-members that one of his first customers was Gov. Bill Egan, who stopped by and bought a cup of coffee. After the fair ended, Sanchez set up shop in Anchorage Avenue, next to Mike O'Neil's Brown Jug Liquor. Mike was my first landlord, Sanchez says. He later moved to Northern Lights and C Street, next to the B & J Store, and in late 1966 opened his store at Arctic Boulevard, just south of Freeway Lane, which is still in business. Sanchez expanded further south in 1968, opening a second restaurant at the Old Seward Highway and International Airport Road in a little yellow and black building. That was scrapped in the spring of 1974 when he built the existing restaurant at the same location, overlooking Campbell Creek.



"In-five-how-are-you?"

OVER THE YEARS, the Arctic Road Runner probably has served more than a million burgers, Sanchez says — and it did so without ever being opened on a single Sunday through all these 40 years. Not only that, Sanchez takes pride in the fact that his two restaurants have been closed on about 99 percent of all holidays. "He credits his employees for his success, including one Road Runner veteran who has 28 years of service, another with 26 years, another with 25 years. And it's not just burgers he serves. His extensive menu includes, among other things, the best hot ham sandwich in town."

ELSEWHERE ON THE restaurant scene, Cafe Amsterdam, in the Metro Shopping Center on Benson Boulevard just north of Denali, began offering its new fall dinner menu this past week — at the same time it expanded with a classy new wine bar. The Amsterdam is a popular breakfast location, especially on Sundays — as well as a busy luncheon spot seven days a week and a quiet haven for dinner Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

SPEAKING OF such things, Villa Nova has been packing ten in some restaurants under the masterful direction of chef George Ormrod, taking over once again as owner of this neighborhood dining spot on Arctic Boulevard at International Airport Road. On Aug. 20, when the old master returned to the

kitchen, Villa Nova was sold out as large regulars turned the evening to a huge welcome-home party for the chef, back from a hiatus of nearly three years, during which he helped launch a new restaurant in San Francisco.

BEYOND THE DINING scene, let's note that we're heading into some heavy politicking with the general election just 7 1/2 weeks away. There will be a constant drone of television campaign claims and counterclaims of George Bush and John Kerry, Lisa Murrinhua and Tony Knowles will be our constant companions.

WE WERE WRONG if we thought the campaigning in July and August was a bit too overdone, a tad too acrimonious, a punch too much of in-your-face. All that was mild compared to what we'll experience from here until election day. But the nation, the state and the city have survived a lot of political harangues in years gone by. With the passing of time, they all get stuffed into our memory box, already jammed with tidbits of personal and civic history. For now, let's simply repose in warm memories of one of the most wonderful summers ever experienced in this part of the world.

WITH THAT IN mind, it's time for predicting what the coming winter will be like. Sure, only scientific climatologists can claim to have experts about forecasting the weather. But anyone is free to make a guess about what lies ahead. You can do it. Your next-door neighbor can do it. The fellow riding the People Mover bus can do it. The lady at the check-out counter at Wal-Mart can do it. Even the fellow standing on the corner with a cardboard sign can do it. The best here is this: The coming winter will be a mild one. Not too cold. Not too snowy.

WHICH LEADS right up to what we'll call our first-ever Sunday Sermon, drawn from a source that is unknown. The message from this anonymous author — no matter what the coming winter holds — is simple and clear: "If you always live while you're always here," William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Staff editor

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Senior editor

Home front

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On February 14, 1994, the

bringing the total to \$750 million in the coming year.

Multiple attacks on the United States

Plans to state and local first responders

million in grants to Alaska's five departments

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“Memory of Remembrance” in Anchorage

Abstract

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The Anchorage Lines

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CAMPAIGN STOP?
NO THESE ARE
YOUR POSITIONS
ON THE ISSUES

THE MMS

A route is being selected to extend a Alaska to Highway 37

6

the river B C Hydro, which operates the for the mineral market to recover

ject the Alaskan power system to try exporting power

A power link with Alaska

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

KNOWLES SUPPORTERS IN WASHINGTON, D.C., ...

Spinning yarns

IT IS BECOMING clear that Democrats in Washington, D.C., are willing to do or say just about anything to get US Senate hopeful Tony Knowles elected — up to, and including, telling the occasional whopper.

You can almost feel their desperation. They need to defeat incumbent Lisa Murkowski because her seat could be pivotal in allowing Democrats to regain control of the Senate, where they can ram taxes and gun control down Americans' throats. To win her seat, they need Alaska's sizeable bloc of veterans to vote for Knowles.

The most recent yarn spun by the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee was a television ad showing Knowles sitting in a jet cockpit, calling to mind the campaign-crapping picture of Michael Dukakis riding in a tank. The voice-over indicated Knowles was "a combat veteran" in Vietnam. The implication clearly was that he flew fighter jets in that conflict.

That is not true, but a news account quoted a DSCC spokesman actually having the chutzpah to deny the jet image was confusing; that it did not misrepresent Knowles' service. Knowles, the news account noted, supposedly was perceived

THE OFFENDING language was changed — but only after several days of air time, mind you — to say "veteran" instead of "combat veteran." Despite the wording change, the image of Knowles in the jet remains in the ad, as does the implication that the former governor was a winged warrior.

If Knowles was miffed because the DSCC, which so far has pumped more than \$13 million into the Alaska Democratic Party, had the audacity to describe him a combat veteran, how do you explain Knowles' election Web site describing him as "A Veteran Who Fought in Vietnam"? That would make him a combat veteran in anybody's book. Or is his Web site also misleading?

Also on the Web site is this: "Knowles volunteered for the US Army in 1962, joining the 82nd Airborne Division, and later served in Vietnam." The wording could lead one to believe Knowles went overseas with that division. But the 82nd Airborne, or its 3rd Brigade, did not arrive in Vietnam until 1968, three years after Knowles was discharged.

In the 1998 Official Election Pamphlet put out by the Division of Elections, Knowles was a little more clear. He said he was in the 82nd Airborne from 1962 to 1964, and then went to Vietnam and worked in intelligence as a Specialist 5 with the Military Assistance Command Vietnam from 1964 to 1965.

There was no mention of fighter jets, but with two months left before the election, Washington, D.C., Democrats still have time to create the Tony of their fantasies for Alaskans

Reflections of yore from a duck blind

By TOM BRENNAN

There were photos on the duck flats this opening day, the spirits of friends who died or have moved away and won't pose this way again.

One's mind tends to wander when sitting in a blind, looking at an empty sky and waiting for ducks or geese to come your way. The usual options are counting the fleckles on your hands (mine are 78 right, 64 left), solving word problems and thinking about those who should be in the marsh but aren't. In my bunch and many others, flying out to a shack on the far edge of Cook Inlet and rising early on Sept. 1 is a long-time tradition. Two of my mentors were among the missing this year, two who got me started in duck hunting years ago.

Ben Hultner and Hank Rosenthal both left the planet some last season. Ben died of heart failure in April and Hank was killed last October by a van that jumped the curb in Frigade, Czech Republic, which he was visiting with his wife Heather.



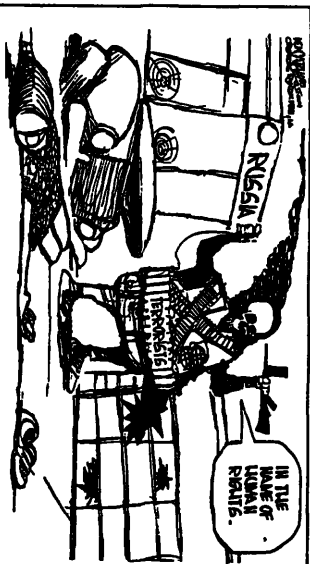
Ben Hultner

Ben befriended me in 1967 when I was in my first stint at The Anchorage Times and started writing an outdoor column called "Babe in the Woods."

It was so labeled because I was new to Alaska and knew little about its outdoors, but wanted to go afield and write about what happened there.

Ben was then a biologist for the state Game Division. He and Ruge Andrews, a fisheries biologist, worried about the possibility that I might spread misinformation and saw my column as an opportunity to get useful stuff to sportsmen. So both took me under their wings, got me out in the woods and fed me enough good material for many columns.

Hultner later became a deputy commissioner in the Alaska Department of Fish & Game and a wildlife biologist at Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., where I spent 18 months as an employee and several years as a consultant. Ben was a close friend of Bill Hopkins, who headed up the Alaska Oil & Gas Association.



Hultner and Hopkins shared a cabin a few shacks down from the place Rosenthal, several other partners and I own on a lake that shall remain nameless. On many opening-day excursions they came by after shooting hours to help us choose select beverages.

I met Hank Rosenthal in 1969 the day the tanker Manhattan arrived at Prudhoe Bay after an experimental trip through the Northwest Passage. Hank was a public relations guy for Humble Oil & Refining (which later became Exxon) and was aboard to support the Manhattan voyage. I was the media man here for ARCO, had taken the job just a few months before.

After the Manhattan departed, Hank remained in Alaska and became Humble's first full-time public affairs representative here. Though Humble was looking at the Manhattan to pioneer tanker traffic through the Arctic icecap, the only thing the expensive ship ever delivered here was Rosenthal.

Hank was assigned to Alaska because Humble wanted someone to lobby the public and the Legislature on its behalf. Since ARCO had discovered the big oil field, it was getting all the credit in the news media. But Humble had shared the financial load and put up considerable money for its half-interest. So when I brought media people to Prudhoe Bay on ARCO's Leaky, Hank's job (as I interpreted it) was to come along and say "Humble" every time I said "ARCO."

Hank was an outdoorsman from Galveston and ranging to get out hunting and fishing. Since my interests were similar, we teamed up and did both things together on a frequent basis. He was new to Alaska, but knew much about going afield (Besides spending years in the waters and woods of Texas, he dogged through Korea for the Marine Corps during that war.)

So Hank wound up teaching me a lot and getting me involved in many memorable hunting and fishing trips. These included excursions to remote spots around Cook Inlet, the goose flats of Cold Bay and wild parts of Southeast Alaska like Begun Bay on Kuparuk Island.

Hank hadn't been out to our duck shack in recent years, preferring to stay close to the beach he maintained back in Galveston. The others in our group fell in for the traditional first dips. Though our numbers are dwindling, our sons are now filling the cabins and making use of the outdoor lore we've managed to pass on. In some cases, daughters are going there as well. (There are women who hunt and, believe it or not, they don't all look like Dick Cheney.)

Thinking of those who have made their final exit is not an unpleasant reminder of each own mortality. It's just a growing awareness that ultimately somebody else will be out there on opening day and wondering where everybody went.

Tom Brennan is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Thursday, September 9, 2004 **B-5**
WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Staff Editor

MURKOWSKI'S RETURNS SHOW HER AS THE...

Strong favorite

DESPITE THE hubbub over whether Tony Knowles' campaign illegally coordinated with the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee to shift off an over-the-top television ad ridiculing Lisa Murkowski's appointment to the U.S. Senate, one thing is clear: voters have spoken on the tired issue.

In the Aug. 24 primary election, Republican voters rallied to Murkowski, handing her more than 40,000 votes, or nearly 60 percent of those tallied on the Republican ticket. Her nearest Republican competitor, Mike Miller, received about 25,600, or 37 percent.

Those numbers belie the claim that Murkowski is only in the Senate because her father put her there. It rings increasingly hollow when 40,000 voters go to the polls and say they want her to stay there for at least the next six years.

Knowles pulled in about 36,000 votes, trailing Murkowski. But he likely would have posted a better showing if many nonpartisan and undeclared voters had not opted for the Republican ticket and voted for Miller to help Knowles. There is ample evidence in several other races that considerable crossover voting occurred.

Knowles' showing, despite some of his potential votes crossing over to Miller, must not be comforting for his camp. How do the Knowles handlers explain to Outside money sources that his main opponent, who faced strong competition in her race, drew considerably more votes than he did — despite his facing only fringe candidates?

THE PRIMARY BALLOTING seems to give a clear indication that the Democrats' tired refrain about Murkowski's appointment to office has little traction with Republican voters. The Outside group's decision to pull the latest, over-the-top ads may be another hint, although there could be another reason.

A cynic might think yanking the ads was just a predictable campaign dodge. It certainly is fishy. After all, Knowles never uttered a peep — despite his promises to condemn Outside advertising — when the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee ran ads earlier aimed at helping him.

In this latest case, the Outside group did what it wanted — it aired the offensive ads for a few days before it pulled them at Knowles' noble request. Fairly transparent political theater that sets the stage for Knowles to demand the same from Murkowski at some later date. You can almost hear it now: "Those Outside groups listen to me," he'll say. "Why won't they listen to you?"

But no matter the reason for the ads' cancellation, Murkowski's strong showing at the polls clearly is changing the tenor of the campaign, and that is good. Perhaps now issues facing Alaska will take center stage.

Not opening ANWR is irresponsible

By AL ADAMS

The whole world worries about the high price of oil, as well it should. It would be wise if the world also worried about the ever-increasing production and consumption of oil. Neither can continue at a rapidly growing rate indefinitely. Both inevitably will soon decline.

In Alaska, we revel in the increased price of oil. It nicely masks our budget deficit problems of only six months ago and allows us to ignore, at least temporarily, the fact that our precious oil production is now less than half of its peak volume. We are the largest per capita users of SUVs and pickup trucks in the world and we have a climate that eats up energy. But are we worried? Heck no.

Unfortunately, that makes us the same as most other Americans. Where is the outrage at the price of a gallon of gasoline in this political season? Which politician running for office is making an issue of the U.S. Senate's irresponsibility at not passing an energy bill this year? Who is responsible for that lack of action?

After all, the U.S. House of Representatives has passed energy bills three times with bipartisan votes in the past two Congresses and each time the Senate has rejected the legislation. Do we care?

As Alaskans blessed with rich energy resources we should care a lot. I am co-chairman of Arctic Power, which is a not-for-profit citizens' organization that has the sole purpose of opening the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to responsible oil and gas development. Arctic Power has been fighting this issue on behalf of most Alaskans for more than 11 years.

Much of the effort has been focused in Washington, D.C., and on the congressional legislators. Many Alaskans have volunteered to make the turning journey to our nation's capital to educate politicians on the ANWR issue.

It has been a long struggle and, despite the fact that nearly every vote taken in Congress on ANWR has been successful, the blocking tactics of the greens have so far prevailed. The value of the energy beneath the coastal plain is so great that no country, not even America, can afford not to use it.

In the end, the greens will lose and the nation will prosper. The Alaska Native Village of Kaktovik, Alaska, is a small community of about 1,000 people. It is the only village in Alaska that has a pipeline to the coast. The pipeline is owned by the federal government and is used to transport oil from the coast to the village. The pipeline is a lifeline for the village, as it provides the only source of fuel for the village's generators. The pipeline is also used to transport other goods and services to the village. The pipeline is a vital part of the village's infrastructure and is essential for the village's survival.



"Old Ben has been in the family for as far back as I can remember."

ANWR will be opened. But do we need to wait for such an amenability to happen or should we continue to hasten the process and make it occur sooner rather than later?

We Alaskans look hopefully to promises of increased heavy oil production from the West Sak field, or expected new oil from the National Petroleum Reserve, or the riches forecast from the gas pipeline. But let's be honest: The only thing that will save Alaska from the inevitability of an income tax will be a continued increase in the price of world oil.

Such an increase would be a disaster for the nation's economy and Alaska would accordingly suffer despite its large oil income. The reality is that the oil production from the North slope will be modest in volume and serve only to slow the state's production decline, not reverse it.

The gas pipeline will supply jobs and income to Alaska, but probably not for 10 years. The only action that will have an immediate positive impact would be the opening of the ANWR coastal plain. Twenty-one months after the ANWR bill is signed into law the first lease sale will be held. According to the federal government, leasing will generate an estimated \$3.2 billion in cash bonus bids, of which half immediately is paid to Alaska.

Where else can we expect a windfall of \$1.6 billion in the next two years? Where else can we look forward to billions of barrels of new oil production to benefit our children, to say nothing of the nation?

Although we have always acknowledged that ANWR oil might take seven to 10 years to develop, we have forgotten about its immediate impact — billions of dollars within 21 months. We have forgotten to keep reminding our friends in Massachusetts or Georgia or California that their lifestyle depends on oil and that their jobs of record depend on Alaskan oil.

ANWR oil will be the most environmentally responsible oil produced anywhere in the world and it doesn't have a crazy government controlling it. Or does it?

How crazy is it to be at war in the Middle East and do nothing about ANWR? How crazy is it for Alaskans not to throw their whole-hearted support behind the effort to open the coastal plain? How silly is it to be forced to impose an income tax when it can be happily avoided?

Our Legislature and governor have been steadfast in their financial support of Arctic Power's efforts, but we are a citizen organization and we need the help and donations from all Alaskans who benefit from oil in our state. We cannot rely until a president signs the bill to open ANWR. Until that day, relying on what the rest of the world is willing to pay for oil seems rather irresponsible.

The voice of individual voters resonates very loudly in Washington, D.C., especially in an election year. We all need to energize our support for the opening of ANWR, just as we all need to be responsible in our personal use of energy and our protection of the environment. It is obvious that our political leaders cannot or will not open ANWR on their own.

They need people power to help or push them on this issue. Only we can supply that. The future of Alaska is our responsibility. We can all make it a great future. Get involved in ANWR — make it happen.

Al Adams is retired and served 20 years in the Alaska Legislature.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Wednesday September 8, 2004 **B-7**
WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

DEMOCRATS PREFER TO . . .

Kill messenger

THE CAMPAIGNS ARE really rolling now, here and across the land. The Democratic theme is the same in the presidential race as it is in the senatorial contest in Alaska. Kill the messenger.

Nationally, John Kerry and his campaign troops are in a livid rage against the likes of Sen. Zell Miller and Vice President Dick Cheney, both of whom rocked the walls of Madison Square Garden with powerful speeches at last week's Republican National Convention.

At home, the Democratic forces are busy flinging charges of unfair electronic practices by a business group that has been attacking Tony Knowles in a series of television commercials. Both have much in common.

Kerry and the national Democrats avoid responding to the Miller and Cheney lists of failures by the senator from Massachusetts. Instead, they have replied in angry personal assaults on Miller and Cheney.

Ditto here at home. Rather than coming up with any kind of proof that the business group's message is wrong in what it says about Knowles' record, it grabs headlines by attacking the messenger.

Ignore the facts. Whip up the hype and play the public for fools.

My brother, who?

A NEW BOOK about Osama bin Laden revealed something we didn't know about the world's most-wanted terrorist.

Author Jonathan Randal, in "Osama: The Making of a Terrorist," traces something of his family tree.

Osama's father, Mohammed bin Laden, made a fortune from a construction company whose chief client was the Saudi royal family. The father died in a plane crash when Osama was 10 years old, Randal says, leaving behind at least three wives and 54 children by more than 20 different mothers.

The elder bin Laden never married Osama's mother, and never had any other children by her. In the total bin Laden clan, Osama was the 17th of 24 sons. "Many siblings never knew him," Randal writes.

As the Wall Street Journal wryly noted in a review of Randal's book, "It wasn't exactly a tight-knit family."

Correction

In an editorial Saturday, we incorrectly said retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Thomas McInerney was a military analyst for CNN. We should have said McInerney appears regularly on Fox News.

Terror strikes first day of school

By ELISE PATKOTAK

School started this week in Anchorage. The yellow buses are back. The blinking yellow lights are back. Parents all over town are congratulating themselves on having survived another summer vacation. Meanwhile, parents in Beslan bury their children and try to get on with their lives in a town where the first day of school went horribly awry.

You shouldn't have to worry about dying from the simple act of going to school. You shouldn't have to worry about terrorists taking over your school and holding you for two days in torturous heat with no food or water. The only thing you should worry about is whether you'll find someone you like to sit with at lunch or whether you'll get the math teacher from hell.

School should be a place your parents can send you with some modicum of peace of mind that you will be returned to them six to eight hours later in one piece.



Patkotak

Apparently, the first day of school in Russia is a day where parents accompany students to greet their teachers with flowers and a celebratory attitude is maintained to highlight the happiness of knowing that your child lives in a world where he or she has a right to an education, no matter what social class their family belongs to.

Now I realize that for some people in many places of Russia that's not entirely true. There are minorities in Russia who don't enjoy the same privileges as other Russian citizens. And there are minorities here in America who can make that same claim. But the important thing is that despite the disparities, the goal is for equal education and just having that goal is a step further in civilization than we, as humans, have ever gone before.

Why did the militants seize the school? Well, that's easy. Helpless victims. That most horrifying of scenarios for any nation — children held captive.



their lives threatened. Blow up a plane and it's over in an instant. Kidnap a school full of children and you get 24-hour coverage for days.

Here's what amazes me. Did these terrorists really think that the Russian government was going to give Chechnya its freedom in return for the freedom of the hostages? Has this ever really worked anywhere? And how can people who call themselves human sit for two days in a sweltering school watching the children suffer and think this will in any way help further their goal. As far as I can tell, it has only caused the world to shudder with revulsion at them and, by association, their cause.

When I was going to school, back in what now seems like some prehistoricly quaint time, school was where your parents sent you to be educated and where they knew you'd be safe. In my case, in particular, the only thing we usually had to fear was Sister Josephine catching us making a crooked line into church.

I lived next to the school and so hung there through all four seasons. The halls were stinks filled with kids or just filled with nuns trying to get things cleaned up from the last school year or ready for the next. Either way, a kid caught in the hall was considered fair game for helping hand desks and books and generally making themselves useful.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

MARATHON HAS EARNED TITLE OF . . .

Alaska pioneer

MARATHON OIL is celebrating 50 years in Alaska. The company, then known as Ohio Oil Co., bought its first oil leases on the Kenai Peninsula in 1954.

Marathon was a partner in the discovery well drilled at Swanson River in 1957 by Richfield Oil and has remained a player here for a half-century. That discovery helped convince Congress that Alaska could build an economy sufficient for a state and was a critical factor in approval of statehood the following year.

Marathon was active through the years in both oil and gas in the Cook Inlet area, onshore and offshore, until it sold most of its oil production to Forceenergy in 1996. Marathon has remained active in Southcentral gas exploration and development.

Its wells are a primary source of energy for Anchorage area utilities and feedstock for the liquefied natural gas plant at Nikiski. The company continues to invest here and its operations are a mainstay of the Cook Inlet gas industry.

Marathon Oil has earned the title of Alaska pioneer.

Arnie wows 'em

NO WONDER Arnold Schwarzenegger breezed to victory in his bid to become governor of California. He obviously won by utilizing the same talents as a political leader that he put on display in his speech last week before the Republican National Convention in New York City.

He wowed the convention delegates with powerful remarks, dramatically delivered. It was a ringing endorsement of President George W. Bush.

And in very moving ways, the governor revealed personal glimpses of his life as he came to America and found it a land of opportunity — even for a young man who spoke only German, and hardly a word of English.

From a body-building career to stardom on the Hollywood screen, Schwarzenegger has moved on to become a national political force.

And make no mistake. He's for George Bush. He's against John Kerry.

Future depends on vote

I have just read Paul Jenkins' column, "Kerry's past indicates dismal future." What a perfect headline. I am 73 years old and have been through too many presidential elections. Ohh, the rhetoric. But this time our very future hangs on our vote. I have great hopes that readers will think clearly about your excellent article and act upon it.

It seems to be rare these days that such a succinct and straight forward article can find its way into a newspaper. It should be on the front page of every newspaper — even internationally. Thank you for this ray of light in otherwise incomprehensible articles.

I can imagine you received no few put downs but I hope you assigned them where they belong — in the trash. It surely boggles my mind that otherwise reasonably intelligent people can not seem to understand the difference.

Cynthia G Shaw
Anchorage

Keep politics and judges apart

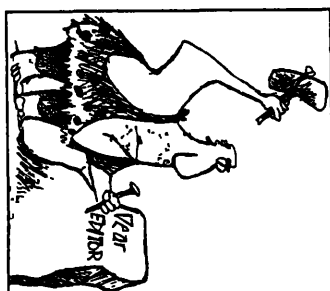
Your Aug. 27 editorial, "Maybe not" criticized a decision by state Superior Court Judge Morgan Christen in one of several election law cases decided last month in various courts throughout Alaska.

Like all the cases, a suit was filed by an individual wanting to ensure the balance we will see in November conform to our rights under the Alaska Constitution and the Constitution of the United States. Like all the cases throughout the country, regardless of whether the judge was elected, a judge or appointed to judicial office, the judge was forced to rigorously evaluate the facts against the law and make the legally correct decision.

Especially in cases that political parties and candidates are parties in a lawsuit, most Alaskans believe our judges should not be politicians themselves. Our judiciary does not need to campaign for office or be beholden to those who contribute to judges' campaigns.

But regardless of the form of judicial selection, every judge must fairly decide every case that ends up on his or her bench.

Letters to The Times



The Times states "judges need to keep their hands off the election process." Who then would decide these disputes?

The judiciary has often been called the "least dangerous branch." While powerful, it does not have police power or the power to legislate. Its sole power is to interpret and apply the laws made by the other branches. One of the most important powers is to ensure that those laws are applied fairly, equally, and with the aims of justice (and not politics) in mind.

Marla N. Greenspan
Judicial Independence Committee
Alaska Bar Association

Information, a good thing

It mystifies me that Cynthia Tobey, Planned Parenthood and others are against women having all the facts before they decide to abort. Someone commented that the governor is trying to shame women by the new requirements.

How is it that knowing about fetal development would shame a woman? Does this mean that there is something shameful about abortion itself? If so, would it not be better to actually know that before choosing to do it?

Someone else feared that doctors could be sued if they do not fully inform a woman. Do the pro-choice people care about the doctor or the woman? It

seems that a group who claims to care about women would want them to be able to know all the ramifications of this life-altering decision. This begs the question: pro-whose choice?

There are many possible post-abortion problems. Online are many chat rooms and Web sites where women share their immense and unrelieved grief afterwards.

A significant percentage of women hope that the intake at the abortion clinic will encourage them to not abort. (See www.anchornews.org) There are problems with self-esteem, depression, drug and alcohol abuse (and more) after abortion.

In Anchorage, Project Rachel provides confidential support to women. It is a safe place to grieve their children and be healed. Call toll free 866-434-3344 or locally 297-7781 for help.

Carol Szopa, RN
Anchorage

Sometimes we can all agree

Thank you for recognizing the important conservation accomplishments of four outstanding Alaskans: Lowell Thomas Jr., Peg Heston and Mary Lou and Jim King.

At the Alaska Conservation Foundation, we sponsor the Lifetime Achievement Awards to celebrate the work of long-time Alaskans who have significantly improved the quality of life in the Greatland.

Going forward, the conservation community is working hard to make important contributions to Alaska's healthy and sustainable communities, to Alaska's great out-of-doors, and to Alaska's economy (including supporting the natural gas pipeline, see our economic vision document at www.pfd-coalition.org).

There will always be some issues on which we will have to agree to disagree with The Voice of the Times, but it is terrific when we can work together on other critical issues and acknowledge the value of mutual respect.

Deborah L. Williams
Executive Director
Alaska Conservation Foundation

The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Editor

REMEMBER WHY WE CELEBRATE ...

Labor Day

ON THIS FIRST Monday of September, with a magnificent summer drawing to a close and winter shivering just around the corner, we take the time to honor the working men and women who have made this nation the envy of the world.

Labor Day does not bring with it parades and speeches and all the trappings of a three-day national holiday. Oh, there are the sales and such, but generally it is time to get ready for the colder months. Many may not remember that the holiday made its way on the calendar in 1894 in the wake of the first nationwide strike. President Grover Cleveland's harsh handling of the Pullman railroad walkout prompted a sketchy Congress to add the holiday.

Pullman manufactured railroad sleeper cars in Pullman, Ill., a company town outside Chicago that was hard-hit by a depression in 1893. Workers for Pullman were required to rent company housing, but the company in 1893 had off more than 2,000 and cut the paychecks of others by an average of 25 percent, but still required rent.

Those remaining on the job walked off May 10, 1894, and the American Railway Union joined the fray, boycotting nationwide any trains with Pullman cars. That triggered rioting, arson and other violence. At the end, 14,000 strike-breakers including National Guard units, marshals and police were called in. At least a dozen people were killed, the union's leadership was indicted and jailed. Cleveland had declared the strike a crime because the mail was delayed.

Pullman company workers went back to work Aug. 2. In the strike's aftermath, the American Railway Union was smashed, and most industrial unions, until the depths of the Great Depression, also were crushed. It may have been a violent and strife-torn beginning for this particular national holiday, but today it has evolved into one rightly honoring America's most treasured assets — its workers.

Ricochet

THE PROTESTERS WHO grabbed their moments on television at the Republican National Convention no doubt were motivated by a deep desire to defeat President George W. Bush in the coming general election. But the displays put on by these left-wing activists may have been counter-productive.

The rocket effect may have won more votes for the GOP hopes than their outlandish behavior did in winning more anti-Bush converts. Bad manners, rudeness, fighting, parading around naked on the streets doesn't sit well with many people, including voters in mainstream America.

The word is that more and more protests, violent and otherwise, are planned as the campaign unfolds. Each demonstration, we suspect, means more votes for the Bush-Cheney ticket.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

Power of the rich tied to politicians

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

The truly rich don't deserve all the political hype we hear, they're only a tiny percentage of our population and not that important.

According to recent U.S. Treasury statistics, the top 1 percent of income earners have an adjusted gross income that starts around \$300,000. While \$300,000 or \$400,000 a year is nothing to sneeze at, it's a far cry from being rich, it's not even yacht-and-Golfstream jet money.

The truly rich Americans are those with assets like Bill Gates (\$46 billion), Warren Buffett (\$43 billion) and Paul Allen (\$21 billion). All told, there are about 276 Americans in the billionaire club. Having just a couple of million dollars in assets won't get you much respect as a rich person.

The 99 percent plus of the rest of us can safely ignore the truly rich. Our attention is better focused on issues far more important to us instead of allowing politicians to divert our attention by getting us worked up over whether the rich are paying their fair share and so-called tax cuts for the rich. The reason we can ignore the rich is because they have little or no power over our lives.

Even if Gates, Buffett, Allen and the 272 other billionaires pooled their assets, what could they make you and me do? Could they force you to bus your kid to a school across town? Could they force you to abandon use of your property so as to provide an abode for some endangered species? Could they force you to wear a seat belt when you drive? Or could they force you into the government's retirement program?

All by themselves, billionaires and multimillionaires have little power over us compared to the awesome power that politicians and medieval government bureaucrats have over us. They can force us to do many things that we otherwise wouldn't do.



"All by themselves" is the operative phrase. The rich can get power over us, but they must first spend their resources to get permission from our elected representatives to rip us off. Wealthy corporate executives can use their wealth and influence to get politicians to rig markets in their favor — like keeping foreign sugar out so they can charge us higher prices and earn more profit.

They can convince politicians to enact laws and regulations that create special privileges that benefit them and their allies at the expense of the rest of us. Donald Trump got politicians to use laws of eminent domain to throw Vera Coking, an elderly widow, out of her Atlantic City, N.J., home to make room for expansion of his casino. Had it not been for the Washington, D.C.-based Institute for Justice, Atlantic City officials would have succeeded.

We might be tempted to blame the rich. I say no. In the example of Donald Trump, had he privately tried to take Vera Coking's house, he would have been arrested and sent to jail. He avoids that risk by getting politicians under the color of law to do the same thing. In this case, we should blame

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WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

What's next?

Until Congress decides to respect the Constitution and comes to understand that complete and immediate campaign disclosure is the only answer, we wait with bated breath for the next round of "reform."

SOME FOLKS ARE leery, fearing the worst — you know, a string of sub-zero weeks and bone-chilling winds to

ON TO OTHER MATTERS: Air Force Lt Gen Carroll (Howie) Chandler, Alaska's top military commander for the last three years, is moving on to the Pentagon. He'll soon be taking over as deputy chief of staff, Air and Space

guardman" — meaning that he served in the Guard while still holding a job in civilian life. For Robinson, that meant switching back and forth from one uniform to another — doffing his one-stripe Air Force jacket and putting on one with four stripes. In civilian life, you see

**WILLIAMS' WORKS AVAILABLE IN THE PAPERBACKS
AGE THREE.**

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Voice of the Times

Saturday, September 4, 2004 **B-7**
WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

TOM MCINERNEY SAYS KERRY'S TESTIMONY ...

Treasonous

A FORMER TOP military commander in Alaska, retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Tom McInerney, has several words of criticism about Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry.

McInerney, now a noted military analyst for CNN, was interviewed by ABC radio's John Batchelor and he minced no words.

Kerry testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1971 and charged U.S. soldiers in Vietnam were "monsters" who routinely committed barbaric atrocities against civilians.

Said McInerney:

"There is deep, deep anger for a man who, if he had done this during World War II, would have been tried for treason."

The former head of the Alaskan Command at Elmendorf was a combat pilot during the Vietnam War and two of his brothers served there, one of whom was killed in action.

Kerry, the general said, "betrayed us. He betrayed not only my personal family but my (West Point) classmates and all the veterans that were over there."

McInerney told Batchelor: "We did not do those things that he claimed that we did."

Because of Kerry's testimony, the retired Air Force leader says, servicemen returning home from Vietnam service were greeted as "babykillers."

Point of view

THE WASHINGTON Post, in a story by John F. Harris reporting on the Republican National Convention, said fear was the focus of convention speeches by Vice President Dick Cheney and Sen. Zell Miller, a Democrat from Georgia who was the keynote at the GOP gathering.

Well, the reporter may have thought that the focus of their remarks was fear — simply because they addressed the threat of terrorism and the nation's proper response to it.

We have a different point of view.

We'd say the focus of the remarks by Messrs. Cheney and Miller was courage — not fear. They did not have America cowering before terror. They viewed an America courageously standing up to terror — a nation led by President George W. Bush.

We like their approach. We reject the editorial slant presented by a Washington Post reporter who can't tell the difference between fear and courage.

Please to reach us

Same old Social Security scare tactics

By MICHAEL TANNER

Predictably, South Carolina Democratic senatorial candidate Rep. Tim Wainwright is attacking her Republican opponent, Jim DeMint, over his proposals for Social Security reform. DeMint would allow younger workers to privately invest some of their Social Security taxes through individual accounts. Wainwright calls this a "risky scheme" that would "tear apart Wall Street." She promises never to "privatize Social Security."

But beyond the usual rhetoric about Social Security being a "trust fund" and a vague pledge to "restore fiscal responsibility," Mr. Wainwright tells us absolutely nothing about what she would do to solve Social Security's looming financial crisis.

Yet Social Security will begin to run a deficit — spending more money on benefits than it takes in through taxes — in less than 15 years, by 2018, according to the last report of Social Security's Trust Fund, which is supposed to help pay benefits until 2042, in reality only until 2034, in reality only until 2024.

While few observers doubt that those benefits will ultimately be paid, the federal government will still have to find the money to pay them.

Overall, Social Security now faces unfunded liabilities in excess of \$26 trillion. One has to wonder where Mr. Wainwright is planning to get that money.

Actually, it's all too clear where the money will come from. As former President Bill Clinton pointed out, there are only three options for Social Security reform: raise taxes, cut benefits, or invest privately. Because Mr. Wainwright rules out private investment or benefit cuts, she could be accused of implicitly endorsing tax increases. And mighting roughly a 50 percent increase in the payroll tax or the equivalent.

Not that financing is the only problem with Social Security. The program already provides today's workers with a "pay-as-you-go" system. The program under privatization penalizes African-American, working women and others. Workers don't own their money or have

My dear Congress, shall make no law affecting freedom of speech or the press so long as the proper 527 organization reports have been filed and to one suggests who to vote for, or against. Oh And you shouldn't be able to offer a candidate or a voter



any guaranteed right to their benefits. In short, it is a program crying out for reform.

Jim DeMint's proposal for Social Security reform is not perfect. It is more complex and more expensive than some experts would like to see. But it would restore Social Security to permanent solvency, and do so for a lower cost than simply proping up the existing program. It would give low-income workers and minorities a chance to accumulate real, inheritable wealth. And, it would give workers true ownership and control of their retirement income.

Whatever one thinks of the details of his plan, Rep. DeMint deserves enormous credit for being willing to stand up and face the difficult challenges of Social Security reform. In fact, few in Congress have been as outspoken on the issue.

Former House Speaker Tip O'Neill once called Social Security the "third rail of American politics," saying it represented a "bottom line" that no politician could touch. But DeMint's subway system. Touch it and your political career ends. But unless someone is willing to touch the r-

The Anchorage Times

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Michael Tanner, director of the Project on Social Security at the Cato Institute, is the editor of the new book, *Social Security and the Democratic Perspectives on Choice* (Cato Institute, 2004).

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

LIST OF JUDGES SHOULD INCLUDE ...

All qualified

IT IS LONG past time when Alaskans should become concerned about how judges are selected in this state, and Gov. Frank Murkowski's recent rejection of a list of Alaska Judicial Council nominees to fill an Anchorage Superior Court judgeship underscores the problem.

Murkowski rejected the three nominees offered by the council, which evaluates the qualifications of judge applicants and submits nominees' names to the governor. Last year, as he was considering nominees for other judgeships, he told the panel he wanted the names of all qualified nominees — not just a few of those who meet muster. The council said it must offer only the most qualified, although the constitution is not on that point.

This time around, Murkowski should stand his ground. A governor should have more say in judicial appointments, especially in a state with a constitution designed to make the chief executive perhaps the most powerful in the nation.

The Alaska Constitution requires the council to send the governor a list of at least "two or more" judgeship nominees for vacant judgeships, and the governor is beholden to select the new judge from that list.

The problem is that the council is controlled by lawyers, three appointed by the Alaska Bar Association, and the chief justice of the Supreme Court — who votes to break ties. The three other members, non-lawyers, are citizens appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Legislature.

IT IS A system, its proponents say, set up to isolate judgeship selection and judges from politics and cronyism. But in essence, a powerful, liberal special interest group with its roots in the judiciary is in a position to dictate to the chief of the executive branch which — and how many — candidates can be considered for appointment.

Murkowski is not the first governor to clash with the council. Gov. Wally Hickel asked for more choices from the council as he tried to fill an Anchorage Superior Court judgeship in 1983. He was looking for law-and-order judges closer to his philosophical bent, according to news accounts, but his request was rebuffed. The council decided the governor could not ask for more names.

Sending the names of two candidates, or three, by the council when it could send four or five or more, seems arbitrary to us. Why, indeed, not forward the names of all qualified applicants?

Why is the council allowed to bury qualified candidates and what criteria are used to differentiate between applicants determined qualified? Qualified is qualified.

It would seem only fair that nominees deemed worthy by the council should find their names on the list sent to the governor or any other. To do otherwise allows the council far too much power in executive decisions.

Plan or smokescreen: time will tell

BY PAUL JENKINS

The Anchorage Police Department, trying to rectify weaknesses set out last year in an internal report ordered by Mayor Mark Begich, has come up with — what else? — a five-year, strategic plan.

Its first-ever, long-range planning effort deals with hiring new officers, as well as improving performance, technology, public relations and capital projects planning. The department also plans to hire a recruiter.

It is easy to understand how a \$60 million-a-year department with reported chronic manpower shortages — 93 officers shy by its account — could benefit from more cops on the streets of a growing city with troublesome rape and violent crime statistics. As of Thursday, the department had 512 employees, with 353 of them sworn officers.

Police Chief Walt Hoenes, the Daily News reported, said this week that until the strategic plan was produced, his department was akin to a ship drifting on a river. "We'd always

complained that there was no rudder," he said. "Now we have one."

Far be it from me to point out the obvious, but a skeptic might say that the first thing all businessmen tend to do on the heels of a critical performance evaluation is to come up with a plan, strategic or otherwise, to keep the wolves at bay.

There is nothing like promising to do better in 50,000 words. That name alone might say what is needed here, because of the department's previous performance, as a wholesale housecleaning of the upper ranks. I'm not sure I agree — yet.

The statistics uncovered in last fall's so-called "60-day management report" are enough to cause any police administrator's hair to stand on end, things like "because of understaffing, 23 percent of reports of sexual assault cannot be investigated." Or, of the 569 child



crimes reported between February 2003 and August 2003, 229 "remained unsolved due to staffing shortages." That's about 40 percent. A news story indicates the Crime Against Children Unit had only had three of the eight detectives it should have had.

In all of that, a lack of manpower or just lousy management? Deputy Chief Rob Hoen says it is the former. Cases were assigned a priority, he said, and some were not followed up. "They went through a cost-benefit analysis that any case would go through," he said.

After last fall's management report, Sen. Lisa Murkowski and Ted Stevens rounded up \$2 million in federal funds to help pay for the Special Victims Unit and the Crime Intervention Unit, which investigate sexual assaults and try to deter them, and for other services.

The department's manpower problems — now referred to as human capital shortages — have existed for as long as anybody can remember. It can be argued that the shortage plagues virtually every aspect of the department's operations.

"After the 60-day report," Begich said, "they acknowledged that they did

not have a strategic plan of action. They wanted more people. We told them, you don't get money until you can tell us how you'll use it. I wanted a strategic plan. Without a plan you can't get there."

He got one. It is a 51-page "living" document, with a 39-page supplement packed with meaty stuff like "core values," "mission statements," and "strategies."

It also includes a lot of things that sound vaguely like feel-good mumbo-jumbo — "participatory decision-making methods," for instance. It does not include a lot about actually enforcing the law, but I assume that is implied.

Hoen says the plan includes "continuous monitoring and measuring," steering committee meetings once a month and goals such as improving the work force by "objective career development," controlling the attrition rate, reducing lawsuits, improving hiring practices and improving personnel procedures.

But in the long run, it will take more cops. Begich says he hopes to make this 10-unit traffic unit part of the core budget and add money for more officers. He says it is impossible to add 53 of them immediately. There are only two academies each year. Each can handle up to 26 candidates. With luck, the city may have a net increase of 10 officers this year, he said.

By most measures, Anchorage has one of the best police departments around, staffed by good people who want to do a good job. If it gets all rapes and child assaults and property crimes investigated, that is even better. If not, if it is a smokescreen, it will be easy to tell because of the "continuous monitoring and measuring" Hoen speaks of.

The mayor says he does not know if the troubling statistics in the department's 60-day report have improved, but he says

"They have a plan — and they better produce."

Indeed
Paul Jenkins is an editor of The Anchorage Times

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

CONDOLENCES AND DEBT OF GRATITUDE FOR ...

Carl Anderson

THE VIOLENCE of war struck close to home this week with the military's announcement that a young airman stationed at Elmendorf Air Force Base was killed in Iraq on Sunday, and two others were wounded.

Airman 1st Class Carl L. Anderson Jr., 21, of Georgetown, S.C., who volunteered for the Air Force at 18 and was a member of the 3rd Logistics Readiness Squadron, was killed when a roadside bomb exploded outside Mosul Staff Sgt. Michael Helmick and Airman 1st Class Jacob Sutton, riding with Anderson in a five-ton truck, were wounded.

Anderson's was the first combat death of an airman stationed at Elmendorf in recent memory. With heavy hearts, we can only pray it will be the last.

Gov. Frank Murkowski, on Tuesday said he was saddened by Anderson's death, and offered his prayers for the families of the servicemen.

"The military is such a part of Alaskan life that all Alaskans celebrate their victories and mourn their losses together," he said in a news release. "They are our neighbors, our friends, our family. And words cannot adequately express the loss we feel. We can only offer our humble condolences."

As we go about our daily lives it is too easy to forget that servicemen and women who attend school meetings with us, whose kids play baseball and football with ours, can find themselves in the blink of an eye halfway around the world in harm's way. We should remind ourselves of our debt to them and their immense sacrifice for us.

Airman 1st Class Carl L. Anderson Jr. will be missed. His efforts and devotion helped keep this nation free.

Our hearts go out to his family and his friends, and his fellow servicemen at Elmendorf and elsewhere who are putting their lives on the line daily. May God protect them.

Olympic cheers

IF YOU believed the news media, you might think Americans are reviled in much of the world.

And speculation prior to the recently ended Summer Olympic Games was that the American team would be jeered when it showed up in Athens.

But those who attended the games' opening ceremonies, including former Anchorage Mayor Rick Mystrom, reported that the American team was loudly and enthusiastically cheered.

In fact, said Mystrom, the only athletes to get a wilder welcome were the Greeks themselves, the home team. So much for media wisdom these days.

Bold ideas promoting tax reform

By STEPHEN SLIVINSKI

When a passage from House Speaker Dennis Hastert's recently published memoir was leaked to the media on Aug. 2, outlining his goal of abolishing the Internal Revenue Service and ditching the current income tax code, some were inclined to write the idea off as the product of a slow news day.

Yet the next week a supporter of President George W. Bush asked him about the idea at a reception rally in Florida, and the president said it's worth serious consideration.

Speculation quickly turned to whether this idea would have a place in the president's GOP convention speech. It soon became obvious that this idea was touching a nerve with voters.

What gives?

Anyone who has ever filed a tax return would likely have some sympathy for what Hastert is proposing. The complexity of the tax code says entire days from our lives. By the government's own estimates it takes taxpayers 28 hours and 30 minutes to complete an average tax return — 42 minutes longer than last year.

The official tax rules now span more than 60,000 pages. Bending them front to back would be akin to reading "War and Peace" 40 times — and about as enjoyable. In fact, the tax code is so complex even the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) can't figure it out.

A Treasury Department investigation discovered recently that IRS help-center employees provided the correct answers to tax filers only around 50 percent of the time. You could get just as good an answer to your tax question by simply flipping a coin.

But what if you could get rid of the forms and the fuss?

The best way to do that would be to replace the income tax completely — tear it out by its roots — and replace it (along with the corporate income tax, the estate tax, the capital gains tax and the most excise taxes) with a national sales tax.

Imagine you cash your paycheck.



Under the current tax system, you still have to report all that money to the IRS and you would have to pay tax on most of the dollars you earned, regardless of whether you spent it or saved it.

What's worse is that the dollars you saved will be taxed again. Assuming you didn't place your savings in a tax-deferred savings fund like an individual retirement account (IRA), the interest earned on that savings would be subject to tax, too.

Under a national sales tax, by contrast, the dollars you spend are taxed, but the dollars you save are not. You pay the tax at the cash register. And there will be no more intrusion into your personal finances by the IRS.

Perhaps best of all, because the income tax and all other taxes that penalize investing and saving will no longer exist, there would be a boom in economic growth.

Getting rid of the income tax would restore a great deal of accountability to government. Because the income tax system is so complex, taxes all sorts of income at various different levels and is hidden in the press of so many goods, the true cost of government is shielded from taxpayers.

Imagine seeing how much you actually pay in taxes with each transaction. With such visibility, the political pressure to keep the tax rate low would be intense.

A big idea is just what President Bush needs to show voters he is serious about creating an innovative domestic agenda for his next term.

A promise to reform the entire federal tax system is just such an idea. A commitment to a national sales tax to replace the income tax would be an even better and bolder one.

Stephen Slivinski is director of budget studies at the Cato Institute and co-author of the forthcoming Cato study, "A Fiscal Policy Report Card on America's Governors."

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WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

GNASHING OF TEETH IS A SIGN OF MISSING . . .

The point

Wait a minute. Let's take a

A primary is not, and should not be, a preliminary run-general election — in which a voter can pick and choose among candidates from different parties.

polls amounted to not much

decisions emanating from blanket primary

primary

choice could vote for its candidates

What's wrong with that?

primary

ALISA MIURKOWSKI in the U.S. Senate race

Alaska's history

By ELISE PATKOTAK

I had no idea that I had to be in a car unless you were in an SUV.

don't even know

PAIKOTAN

Would be maintenance

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THE MICRORAGE LINES

• e-mail: ArchTimes@alaska.net

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torial voice of the former Anchorage Times

BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

Tuesday, August 31, 2004 B-5

BRIG. GEN. JAMES LABELL

West Point hero

TO CASUALLY know James Labell was to encounter a gentleman of the old school, with a soft-spoken Southern voice, an erect bearing, and a warm smile. Handsome, dignified, modest. You'd never suspect the man was a war hero, a powerful commander of men, one who in his younger days was the captain of the West Point football team.

He was born in Union City, Tenn., but was an Alaskan by adoption — living here for 32 years, including four years on active duty in the Air Force and 28 years after returning from the service.

Jim Labell, who observed his 90th birthday on June 3, died Aug. 18 at the Air Force retirement home in San Antonio, Texas. He and his late wife, Virginia, moved there from Anchorage in 1995 and it was there that she died a year later. He returned as an Air Force brigadier general in 1967 after 34 years of service, including heroic action as commander of the 458th Bombardment Group with the 8th Air Force in England during World War II. As a pilot of a B-24 Liberator bomber, Labell, then a colonel, led his group on 22 combat missions over enemy-occupied Western Europe and Germany — and directed more than 200 other missions by the 458th.

AFTER THE WAR and assignments at home and back in England, he came to Alaska as chief of staff and then deputy commander of the Alaskan Air Command, a four-year tour. Later assignments were as chief of staff of the Continental Air Command and as commander of the 1st and 2nd Air Force Reserve Regions, with headquarters at Andrews Air Force Base in Washington, D.C.

After his retirement from the Air Force, he and his wife came back to Alaska. In civilian life, he served as director of the Alaska Disaster Preparedness Office and later as special assistant in Alaska for the secretary of the Interior.

Gen. Labell's military career began when he enlisted in the Army in 1933 and attended the West Point Preparatory School in pursuit of his dream of entering the U.S. Military Academy. His appointment to West Point came in 1934. As a cadet, Labell was a heavyweight boxer and as a 204-pound tackle, he captained the 1938 West Point football team that climaxed its season with a 14-7 victory over archrival Navy. His military awards included the Legion of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross with oak leaf cluster, the Bronze Star, the Air Medal with two clusters, and the French Croix de Guerre.

In war and in peace, Jim Labell was a credit to his country which he served and to Alaska, a state he loved. Finally, his remains will be returned here for a memorial service scheduled at 4 p.m. on Sept. 11 at Elmendorf Air Force Base.

Alaskans who know him were blessed by being able to call him a friend.

Why Democrats hate George Bush

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

Upon losing a game at the 1925 Baden-Baden tournament, Aaron Nimzovich, the great chess theoretician and a superb player, knocked the pieces off the board, jumped on the table and screamed, "How can I lose to this idiot?"

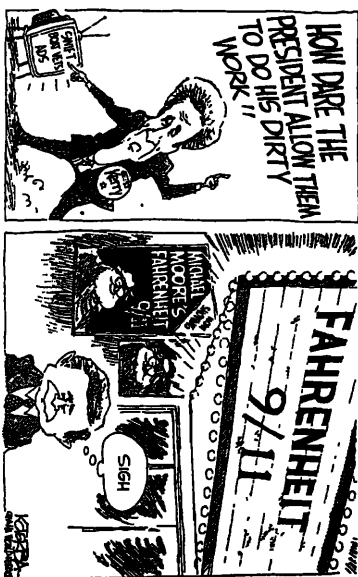
Nimzovich may have lived decades ago in Denmark, but he had the soul of a modern American Democrat. After all, Democrats have been saying much the same — with similar body language — ever since the erudite Adolf Stevenson lost to the syntactically challenged Dwight Eisenhower in 1952. They said it again when they lost to that supposed simpleton Ronald Reagan. Twice, would you believe? With George W. Bush, they are at it again, and equally apoplectic.

Actually, this time around, even more apoplectic. The Democrats' current disdain for George Bush reminds me of another chess master, Elmer Bagolubov, who once said, "When I am White, I win because I am White." — While moves first and therefore has a distinct advantage. "When I am Black, I win because I am Bagolubov." John Kerry is a man of similar vanity — intellectual and moral — and that spirit thoroughly permeates the Democratic Party.

Democrats feel a mixture of horror and contempt for the huddled masses — so bountiful, so beaughted, so besotted with talk radio — who made a king of an empty-headed movie star (Reagan, long before Arnold) and inexplicably want the Republicans' current nuptial leader to have a second term.

Historians will have a field day trying to fathom the depths of detestation that the Democrats are carrying into this campaign. Vanity is only part of it. What else is at play? Fear, and most obviously, revenge. Democrats have convinced themselves that Bush stole the last election. They cannot bear suffering not just a bad presidency but an illegitimate one.

Moreover, against all expectations, it turned out to be a consequential presidency. Bush was not the mild-mannered, Gerald Ford-like Republican he was expected to be — a transitional and minor. He turned out to be quite the revolutionary, most especially in his radical reordering of American foreign



policy. A usurper is merely offensive, a consequential usurper is intolerable. But that's still not enough to account for the level of venom today. It is not often that a losing presidential candidate (Al Gore) compares the man who defeated him to both Hitler and Stalin. It's not often that a senior party leader (Edward Kennedy) accuses a sitting president of starting a war ("looked up in Texas") to gain political advantage for his re-election.

The loathing goes far beyond the politicians. Liberals as a body have gone quite around the twist. I count one all-star rock tour, three movies, four current theatrical productions and five best-sellers (a full one-third of the New York Times list) variously devoted to ridiculing, denigrating, attacking and denouncing the president, thus provoking and all who might. God knows why, support it. How to explain? With apologies to Dr. Freud, I propose the Pressure Cooker Theory of Hydraulic Release.

The hostility, resentment, envy and disdain, all superheated in Florida, were not permitted their natural discharge. Came Sept. 11 and a lid was forced down. How can you seek revenge for a stolen election by a nuttiness usurper when all of a sudden we are at war and the people, bless them, are rallying around the flag, and hauling the commander in chief? With Bush riding high in the

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Charles Krauthammer, within a week, nationally syndicated column for the Washington Post Writers Group. © Copyright 2003 The Washington Post Co.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

KNOWLES' ADS ARE NOTHING MORE THAN ...

Overkill

THE MORNING after last Tuesday's primary election, before even the final vote totals were available to folks still reading for a cup of coffee, Tony Knowles peppered the television airwaves with a flood of campaign commercials.

Tony the veteran, standing up for veterans' rights, Tony the job builder, in those days he was governor. Tony's local campaign ads. Seeds of ads from the Democratic National Campaign Committee, which at one time Tony vowed never — never, ever — to use. Tony is good. Lisa Murkowski is bad. Really bad. Over and over again.

The count isn't accurate, but one one viewer estimated that there were a dozen or more Knowles campaign spots aired during a period of not much more than an hour and half.

Over and over and over again. At this rate, the thought is that by the time November rolls around, a lot of people are going to be very tired of listening to Tony — and seeing the way he's spending megabuck campaign contributions from non-Alaskans who want very much to decide who this state sends to the U.S. Senate.

Free plugs

ONCE IN A WHILE, the usual suspects leave us scratching our heads. Take, for example, the free plug for U.S. Senate hopeful Tony Knowles in last Tuesday's Anchorage Daily News.

In a box designed to help voters navigate through voting day, good information on where to vote was offered. It mentioned the Division of Elections information line and Web site as a place where voters could ask where they should vote. That was a laudable, nonpartisan public service and a good use of news space.

But then the newspaper stumbled across the line. It went on to say Knowles' Web site had a polling place locator. Why not mention any of the other candidates on the ballot, Tuesday who, we assume, would have moved heaven and earth to help get potential voters to the polls?

Why the free advertising for Knowles, and only Knowles, in the news columns on an election day? It is the kind of thing that fuels the fires of those who claim bias.

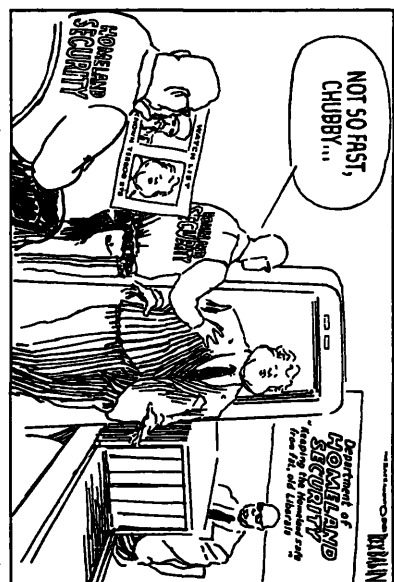
Appeased tyrants only get worse

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

President Bush's foreign-policy critics at home and abroad share characteristics and visions that have previously led to worldwide chaos and untold loss of lives.

These people believe that negotiation, appeasement and caving in to the demands of vicious totalitarian leaders can produce good-sail behavior. Their vision not only has a long record of failure but devastating consequences.

During the late 1930s, France and Britain hoped that allowing Adolf Hitler to annex Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia would satisfy his territorial ambitions. This was after a long string of German violations of the terms of the Versailles Treaty ending World War I. Appeasement didn't work. It was seen as weakness, and it simply emboldened Hitler.



At the Yalta Conference, near the end of World War II, Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt thought they could appease Josef Stalin by giving away Eastern Europe and making other concessions that ultimately marked the beginning of the nearly half-century Cold War and Soviet/China expansionism.

War-weary Westerners hoped that brutal tyrants would act in good faith. Failing to stand up to Stalin resulted in unspeakable atrocities, enslavement and human suffering. Quite interestingly, Western leaders appeased escaped communist leaders from the harsh criticism directed toward Hitler, even though communist crimes made Hitler's slaughter of 21 million appear almost amateurish.

According to Professor R.J. Rummel's research in "Death by Government," from 1917 until its collapse, the Soviet Union murdered or caused the death of 61 million people, mostly its own citizens. Since 1949, communist China's Mao Zedong regime was responsible for the death of 35 million of its own citizens. History never exactly repeats itself.

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but the vision of earlier appeasers was part of the West's vision of how to deal with Saddam Hussein. After devastating defeat in the first Gulf War, Iraq agreed to coalition peace terms. After documents were signed, every effort was made by the Iraqis to frustrate implementation of the terms, particularly U.N. weapons inspections.

Western appeasers, most notably Europeans, were quite willing to respond to Saddam Hussein's violation of peace terms in a fashion similar to their earlier contemporary response to Hitler's violation of the peace terms of the Versailles Treaty. Had Britain or France launched a military attack on Germany between 1934 and 1935, when Hitler started his armaments buildup in violation of the Versailles Treaty and before he fully developed his military capability, he would have been defeated and at least 50 million lives would have been spared.

What deterrent to terrorism? We try to thwart them or kill them. What deterrent to nations that might harbor or assist terrorism? We show them the kind of destruction we're prepared to rain down upon them. Whether we ultimately find nuclear, chemical or biological weapons in Iraq is one thing, but one clear message has been sent as a result of our actions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

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WILDLIFE SHOULDN'T BE MANAGED BY...

Urban whim

A GAIN, BAMB'S disciples are hard at it in Alaska, this time to ban at the ballot box the most tightly regulated and controlled form of hunting in the state.

An outfit calling itself Citizens Against Bear Hunting, and headed by Paul Joslin, former executive director of the Alaska Wildlife Alliance, has decided that the hunting of black bears over bait is a bad thing, and it has gathered enough signatures, mostly from urban Alaska, to force the question onto the November ballot.

The proposed law, which could strip the Alaska Department of Fish and Game of a valuable management tool, is three sentences long and has more holes than a John Kerry war story. In short, it says a person "may not bait or intentionally feed a bear for the purpose of hunting, photography or viewing."

First, ask yourself: Is bear-baiting denting the black bear population? Hardly. Anywhere from 16 percent to 22 percent of the black bears taken by hunters since 1997 were taken over bait. That amounts to fewer than 500 bears a year from a robust and growing population statewide that is far, far from endangered. In some areas, in fact, they are pests.

Hunters must get a permit for a bait station — and only two at a time — post a notice, hunt only in tightly controlled areas away from conflicts with other users and clean up after themselves. And the hunt is only open in most areas a few weeks in the spring.

BUT THAT MEANS little to baitbox wildlife experts. They claim hunting black bears over bait is unfair. That is ridiculous. Hunting is all about a hunter seeking advantage over prey. And most times it is about how the prey feeds, when the prey feeds and where the prey feeds.

How is hunting near bait different than hiding close to a winter-killed moose, or setting up a blind at an earlier bear fall or a berry patch or fishing hole? Or using decoys or calls? In some heavily timbered areas, and the wide open parts of Interior Alaska, baiting is the only way a hunter likely will get close to a black bear.

Most important, in our view, is that the generally worded proposed law could have tremendous, unintended consequences. Will a judge rule that Fish and Game cannot set up discretionary feed stations for black bears to ease predation on caribou or moose? Does it mean that researchers cannot attract black bears with food? Will a court say the law bars Fish and Game from baiting traps to remove nuisance bears?

We are left with the impression that this scheme is just another in a line of such proposals from those who believe Alaska's wildlife should be managed by urban whim at the ballot box — and that is never a good idea.

This fall they will ask you to ban black bear baiting. What will it be next time?

Your vote can mean Alaska jobs

By LEW M. WILLIAMS, JR.

Alaskans elected Sen. Frank Murkowski governor after he advocated building infrastructure to enable development of Alaska resources and to create jobs. He is keeping his word. Now it is up to voters to provide support in 2004 elections.

Last month, in Wasilla, Gov. Murkowski signed the state's operating and capital budgets. News stories headlined the governor's \$4.3 million in vetoes and reductions in state government. Those items were of little concern to most Alaskans because only a few state jobs were affected. And Alaskans got their spending increases for education and public safety.

On the other hand, not much was reported on the \$1.56 billion (that's "billion" with a "b") capital budget, although signing that budget approved thousands of good-paying Alaska jobs, primarily in construction. Also created are thousands of indirect jobs serving and supplying the construction industry. Now that does interest and affect Alaskans.

The federal government should provide \$1.45 billion of the construction budget, mainly for highways and support programs that are financed by the fuel taxes we all pay.

The governor last week extended his plan to provide more infrastructure and jobs. He pledged state timber to keep three small Southeast sawmills going and encourage retraining a Ketchikan veneer plant. At the same time he is encouraging the Forest Service and the Mental Health Trust to make timber sales available adjacent to state sales for more efficiency.

He announced a revised Southeast Alaska Transportation Plan. His plan differs from the previous administration's. It ignored roads for high-speed ferries and even advocated dropping some ferry service, such as to Stewart.

Murkowski emphasizes building roads.



to make ferry runs shorter and more affordable.

His road plans would connect Juneau to Skagway and the continental highway system, connect Wrangell, Petersburg and Ketchikan to a road up the Bristol Bay Canal to be into the Canadian highway system, and across Baranof Island to give Sitka access via shorter ferry runs to Juneau or Kodiak.

He proposes building new ferries to replace the 25- to 40-year-old manulines, plus building a fleet of shuttle ferries to supplement his new roads. He also advocates building those ferries in Alaska. It's about time a state official recognizes that the state owns the Ketchikan Shipyard. The state should use it.

Starting at Wasilla and continuing through Southeast towns, the governor emphasized projects that provide jobs. Assuming those jobs require federal operation, Alaskans serious about jobs are reminded that Alaska Congressmen Don Young is chairman of the House Transportation Committee that

designates federal transportation spending. He is on the ball this year and deserves overwhelming support to assure Alaska jobs.

Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, is chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee. He is not up for reelection this year but Alaskans should look at candidates for that other Senate seat from Alaska and vote for who they believe will best back up the governor's job program. Some complained about nepotism when the governor named his daughter to the senate seat, he was vacating. But Lisa Murkowski was an experienced state legislator when appointed and would be the most enthused about working with Stevens and Young to help finance the governor's jobs programs.

In the legislative races, those who are most likely to support the governor's jobs program deserve voter support. That is, if voters want those jobs.

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BILL J. ALLEN
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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Sunday August 29, 2004 H-2

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

ALASKA IS IN GOOD HANDS, STRONGLY . . .

Republican

NOTIONALLY, THE Democratic Party concedes that its presidential nominee, Sen. John Kerry, doesn't stand a chance of winning the state's three electoral votes. How could he? He's against oil exploration in Alaska's Arctic country. He's for locking up Alaska's forests. His military positions — a flip here and a flop there — don't sit well with Alaska veterans and active duty personnel.

The only hope the Democrats have in Alaska is that Tony Knowles might win a seat in the U.S. Senate, breaking up an all-Republican delegation that has served the state well for more than a quarter of a century. That's why so much Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee money has been pouring into the state, financing TV ads for Knowles. That's why so much Outside greener support has been coming to Knowles.

The supposition is that Knowles doesn't want Sen. Kerry campaigning here. He would pack more negative baggage than Knowles wants in his race against Republican incumbent Lesa Murkowski.

HE ALREADY has an uphill battle. For all his winning smile and aw-shucks demeanor, Knowles already has sponsored some truly vicious campaign commercials against Sen. Murkowski — one featuring some cut-and-paste closeups that make her look like the Wicked Witch of the West.

And don't count on him being any more of a Mr. Nice Guy as the campaign further unfolds. Despite those attacks during the primary campaign, Sen. Murkowski emerged with more votes than Knowles received in his largely uncontested Democratic race. Theresa Obermeyer, among others, hardly served as a severe threat to his re-election.

Murkowski proved in the primary that she could win a statewide race — in her case, against some spirited opposition provided by challenger Mike Miller of North Pole.

For a reason quite opposite of that of John Kerry when it comes to Alaska, President George W. Bush also will be campaigning here. He knows that he has a lock on Alaska's electoral votes — and will concentrate his campaigning, instead, in the so-called swing states where the outcome is in doubt.

Alaskans will settle, instead, for watching Bush and Kerry sling it out on television. Here at home, it will be up close and personal between Lesa and Tony. We only pray it does not become too down and dirty.

Alaska, sadly, isn't what it used to be

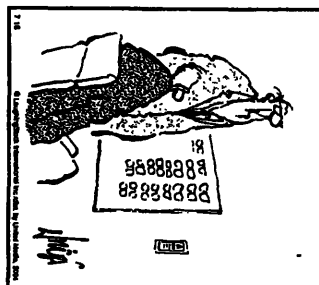
By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

ALASKANS OFTEN LAMENT that the good old days seem to be gone forever — you know, back when they could leave their houses unlocked and their keys in their parked cars, knowing that no one would steal the family jewels or drive off with Mom's Plymouth. But that changes in lifestyles, as sad as it is, hardly compares with the overall wreckage of society as we know it. Alaska just isn't what it used to be. And that's a shame.

THE NEW ALASKA may be most often evident on the streets of Anchorage. It's a war out there, everywhere you drive, any time of the day or night. Buses are the order of the day. All too many cars and trucks are being driven by people who don't give a damn about others. They zoom in and out of traffic, changing lanes without signaling, zooming from one side of the street to the other and back again. All at high speed.

THESE LEAD-FOOTED hot-rod drivers tailgate as a means of intimidating other motorists, and have a compulsion to get ahead of any car or camper or pickup in front of them — even if it means nothing more than moving up one car-length and a quicker stop at the next red light. But red lights, of course, are almost meaningless if they happen to get to the intersection ahead of traffic. These new-age Alaskans don't hesitate to turn through a red light without ever touching the brakes. Yellow lights are simply a signal to step on the gas. And anybody who gets in their way is a target for a jabbing finger, fist-shaking and shouted obscenities. Welcome to the new State of Alaska. They drive better than this in Manhattan on a steamy, humid afternoon in late August.

BUT IT'S NOT just on our streets and highways that these new Alaskans have abandoned decency and civility. You see rudeness and in-your-face attitudes everywhere.



I used to have a bigger eye chart, but I wasn't making any money.

rudeness everywhere, and nobody's property is safe. A friend who drove to one of our parks and went for a jog along the trails returned to find a jag along his locked truck had been smashed and a briefcase stolen. In the briefcase, along with a credit card and other wallet-type material, was a notebook in which he'd for years had recorded such things as the dates of his parents' deaths, family birthdays, addresses and phone numbers of friends, their anniversary dates, and other information impossible to reproduce. Personal value? Priceless. Stolen by hoodlums and punks.

A FEW WEEKS AGO, so the report goes, two or three thugs in a pickup truck drove circles around Little League baseball fields in Eagle River. When a volunteer who worked on the diamonds protested, the driver stopped and jumped out with his buddies and proceeded to beat up on the man who objected to their vandalism. The beating was so bad that an ambulance had to be called to the scene just another day at the ballpark in today's Alaska.

THE CONTINUED pawning off by alcoholic men and women at major street intersections is becoming more aggressive than ever, despite Assemblyman Dan Sullivan's efforts to get the city to crack down on this dangerous activity.

The people who ply the trade now boldly walk right up to the windows of cars stopped at traffic lights and ask for a credit card and ignore them and their result. The buses aren't what they used to be. Usually are littered with garbage and trash and a grocery cart, blocks away from the nearest supermarket, is often upside down in the shrubbery.

EVEN THE AISLES of the local big stores, for that matter, are no longer immune to rudeness. Every shopping trip is likely to be marked by one or more customers who simply charge along, without a by-your-leave if they push you out of the way or bump into your heels with their cart. Pushes? Forget it. He's often lost in this new Alaska of cars.

READ THE LETTERS to the editor. Listen to those interviewed on all too many evening TV newscasts. These letters for the most part are signed by angry people. These who seek their moment of fame on TV have a snarl in their voices and bitterness in their hearts. They vilify others. They call others names.

DOESN'T ANYBODY smile any more? Don't Alaskans take pride in others? Can't they find happiness in the compliments of others? Not so you'd think it very much these days. Too bad. Life shouldn't be all a grumble and a groan. Must some drivers go head-on for better every time they get behind the wheel? A couple of weeks ago, one was seen racing at high speed through traffic, weaving back and forth between lanes, jumping through at least one red light, and cutting off other motorists obeying the speed limit until he made a screeching turn into his head-to-get-there-fast goal — a McDonald's drive-through lane.

WHAT'S THE CURE? Maybe there isn't one. Maybe there is no reason to cringe in this day and age. Maybe we are only taught at home, and too many apparently have grown up without learning much in households where bad language, rudeness, and a lack of respect for others were the order of the day. In this way, at least, Alaska has changed. And not for the better.

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Senior editor

Maybe not

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Republican Moderate Party

under any circumstances.

Vote cast in the November 2002 election

Saline Treatment

reported in the Anchorage Daily News

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What's wrong with that?

It's a stretch that challenges common sense.

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By PAUL JENKINS

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100 TO MAKE A POINT, AND

• e-mail: AnchorTimes@attask.ca

torial voice of the former Anchorage

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times@ataska.net

BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TORIN
Senior Editor

Thursday, August 26, 2004 **B-7**

MURKOWSKI AND KNOWLES HEED FOR ...

Main event

AS THE DUST settles from Tuesday's primary election and pundits poke through the debris trying to sort out exactly what happened, and to whom, and for what reason, it is clear that Sen. Lisa Murkowski did quite well in her first statewide political race.

The senator unsurprisingly defeated Republican primary election opponent Mike Miller by a wide margin to face Democrat Tony Knowles in the November general election. She weathered attacks about how she got her job, her stance on gun owners' rights and her voting record in the Legislature. Knowles won his spot on the November ballot without much in the way of fireworks by cruising to victory over two fringe candidates in the Democratic primary election.

The final days of the Republican campaign unfortunately featured some pointedly personal and bitter ads from the Miller camp, and Knowles answered heavily to help Miller. In the final days, the campaign turned ugly, with Knowles unfairly and incorrectly suggesting Murkowski had turned her back on veterans.

Miller and his supporters pledged early on that they would keep the race above board and that the primary loser would support the primary winner. While a lot of the rhetoric in the race's waning days was unfortunate, we can only hope Miller holds to the remainder of his pledges.

The race for the U.S. Senate seat now held by Murkowski will be center stage for the next few months, not only in Alaska, but in Washington, D.C., as well.

A win here for Knowles could tip the power scales for Senate Democrats. A Murkowski win helps Republicans retain control of the Senate and buttresses the hard-earned political power of Sen. Ted Stevens.

Alaskans should dig in and be prepared for a tough, exciting and hopefully focused campaign devoid of the misleading attack ads.

Come to the fair

IN YEARS GONE by, the opening of the Alaska State Fair at Palmer often was marked by rain. And more rain. Lots and lots of rain. But, undaunted, people went to the fair anyway and had a great time.

It's State Fair time again, and this celebration of the harvest season and the end of summer comes while Southcentral Alaska enjoys splendid sunshine and warm temperatures.

It couldn't get any better than this — and the gates open today at noon. The fair runs through Labor Day, Sept. 6. The weekday hours are noon to 10 p.m., with 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. opening hours on weekends and Labor Day.

Admission prices: \$8 for adults, \$5 for seniors 60 and over and for youths 6 to 12, and free for children under 6. Hard to beat that. Y'all come.

Oil legacy includes darn good ideas

By TOM BRENNAN

Living in Alaska has many advantages. Those sometimes include the ability to draw on the talents of highly trained professionals for little or no cost. Among the latest to benefit from that fact are Bean's Café and the Food Bank of Alaska, which cranked in on a relatively recent development at Prudhoe Bay.

Bean's and the Food Bank long have shared the mission of feeding the hungry. Bean's is essentially a soup kitchen and the Food Bank collects donated food, stores it and distributes it to the needy through 80 churches, shelters and other agencies.

Bean's and the Food Bank now share a warehouse. Bean's used to pay \$1,000 a month in utilities for its own warehouse and \$30,000 a year for a driver. Now the soup kitchen has rented out its warehouse, diminished the driver position and pays the Food Bank a monthly storage fee.



Brennan

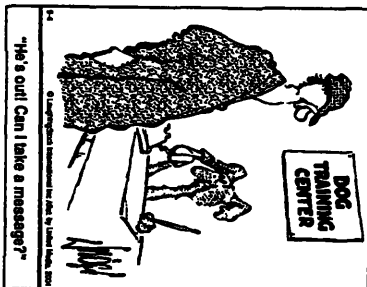
Among the major donors are food stores like Carr's Quality Centers, which provide edible merchandise that is still good but approaching its expiration date and the time for it to be pulled from store shelves.

The close relationship between Bean's Café and the Food Bank of Alaska opens the way for making better use of perishable items that would be difficult to distribute on short notice and might otherwise go to waste.

"If we get a truckload of bananas," Food Bank Director Susanah Morgan told the Anchorage Daily News, "we can call Bean's and say, 'Could you put banana bread, banana pie and banana pudding on your menu this week?'"

The shared services concept, developed at Prudhoe Bay, was the product of some of the oil industry's best logistical minds. It was developed after decades in which the major companies at Prudhoe duplicated each other's efforts in order to protect corporate secrets.

After all, information in the oil and gas exploration game can be worth millions of dollars, in some cases even billions. But not all information is equally valuable and excessive secrecy can sometimes result in unnecessary duplication of effort.



In the early days at Prudhoe Bay, oil company scouts watched each other's operations like hawks. They often flew over drilling rigs and counted the lengths of pipe being used, with that information they could calculate the depth at which the rig was operating and evaluate any evidence of success, like oil or gas being flared off after a discovery.

In the earliest years, ARCO operated the eastern half of the Prudhoe Bay field for itself and its partners, primarily Exxon. Later, the eastern operator became ConocoPhillips Alaska. BP Alaska has operated the western half of the field for many years.

As the North Slope companies expanded their operations and improved their ability to evaluate information and keep the most important material secret, they began looking for ways to reduce costs. The most obvious — at least to their top logistical thinkers — were to share services in areas where secrecy was no longer essential. That included air charters to carry employees to the North Slope and back, logistics, purchasing, warehousing and more.

The shared services program was initiated with understandable reluctance, given oil executives' natural inclination toward secrecy. But it proved so successful and saved so much money, that industry executives shared what they had learned with others.

And since senior managers of major oil companies often serve on boards like the United Way, the approach was suggested to United Way of Anchorage. Among the early adopters was Dennis McMullan, then executive director of United Way here.

McMullan developed the concept into the Forker Group, a consulting team offering — at affordable rates — expertise in areas like grant writing, financial management, accounting, soliciting bequests and trusts, and training.

When the group formed in 2000, McMullan at first just added its presidency to his responsibilities. He then had more than 20 years in the United Way system, about half as executive director in Anchorage. He wanted to stay in Alaska and found he could create a challenging new career by developing Forker as a non-profit consulting group, a one-of-a-kind organization that could and should be a model for its charitable counterparts in other parts of the country.

The Forker Group became a separate organization in 2002. With McMullan at its helm and was launched with grants from the Kasimov Foundation, BP, ConocoPhillips and United Way. Its expertise has proven time and again to be a better way, an approach that can help Alaska's 180 non-profit organizations to reduce waste and put limited resources where they can do the most good.

North Slope oil has been the source of most of Alaska's wealth for more than 35 years and that legacy has included some darned good ideas.

Tom Brennan is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Publisc

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Wednesday, August 25, 2004 **B-7**
WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

CITY NAME TO BE BORNE BY ...

Navy ship

THE NAME USS Anchorage will once again sail the seas, this time on a San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship to be built in New Orleans. Construction will begin with laying of the keel in January 2006. The ship will be christened in October of 2007 and fully commissioned in April 2009.

Our city's name was selected for the 684-foot Navy vessel in response to a request by Sen. Lisa Murkowski after the first USS Anchorage was decommissioned last October. That vessel — 76 feet shorter than its successor — returned as the most decorated dock landing ship on the West Coast. Its service included Vietnam, the Gulf War of 1990-91, and the USS Cole after a terrorist attack in Yemen in 2000 and support for Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003.

The USS Anchorage will be a formidable warship. Its crew will include 360 Navy sailors and 700 Marines. Its mission will be to transport and land the Marines, their equipment and supplies in amphibious assaults, special operations and expeditionary warfare missions.

It will be configured to carry air cushion vehicles, conventional landing craft, amphibious vehicles, helicopters and vertical take-off and landing aircraft. Its armament will include 30 mm guns and missile launchers giving it the ability to defend itself and provide covering fire for the Marines it sends ashore. Secretary of the Navy Gordon R. England said in announcing the naming that the ship "will project American power to the far corners of the earth and support the cause of freedom well into the 21st century."

We wish the ship and its crew fair rides and following seas. May their achievements be in the tradition of the first USS Anchorage.

Kerry slanders vets

POOR JOHN KERRY He cannot for the life of him figure out why so many veterans are livid with him. Now he is calling former Navy shipmates to ask them why.

They have been telling him it is because he slandered them and hundreds of thousands of other honorable veterans with his false testimony before Congress about atrocities after his four-month stint in Vietnam. He tells them, no, no, no, he was not talking about the swift boat crews, he was talking about the rest of the veterans.

Good grief!

It is enough to make you almost feel sorry for U.S. Senate hopeful **Tony Knowles**, a veteran himself and a Democrat who finds himself bedeviled with the likes of Kerry and John Edwards at the top of his party's national ticket.

Somebody should ask **Knowles** to denounce Kerry in deference of the 76,000 or so veterans in Alaska who did not serve on swift boats — but who now stand slandered as war criminals nonetheless.

Olympic wins resulted from hexes

By ELISE PATIKOTAK

I have to confess I am responsible for Paul Hamm's gold medal at the Olympics in the all-around gymnastics competition. And just to completely ease my conscience, I probably should admit I had a lot to do with Carly Patterson's win in the women's all-around gymnastics competition also.

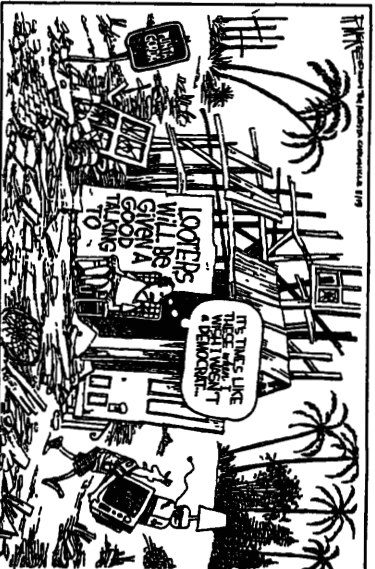
Why, you ask, would an aging baby boomer sitting on a couch in Anchorage who finds running up a short flight of stairs a physical challenge think that she had ANY connection whatsoever to the world of Olympic gymnastics? Well, the ugly truth is that I was the one who sent the bad vibes out to the other competitors urging them to falter, to fail, to take that extra step on landing.

What you need to understand here is that I am not ordinarily very interested in sports or athletics. In my own life, I tried softball once and quickly found out who the far back in right field position was for. We won't even talk about my attempts to connect a thin piece of wood with a small, round moving object. Suffice to say, I never got close enough to even catch sight of the opposing team's right fielder.

I had a roommate for many years to whom the word "baseball" meant "baseball." Any other concept of the passing of time just flew over his head. Once ESPN became available in Barrow, I was afraid he'd lose all ability to walk or be in sunlight.

But I never quite got caught up in the fascination of watching sports. So I never really followed them except for every two to four years when the Olympics were held. Then I became a blubbering captive of every supply story put together by the networks to drag me into the personal life of some young person who had sacrificed their entire existence in order to be the best.

find myself mesmerized by the battle



in the world at some obscure sport that would ultimately lead them to a chiropractor's office very early in life. I mean, seriously, how many sports get covered at the Olympics that cause you to sit up, scratch your head and exclaim, "Huh? You've never heard of it and aren't sure but what Bob Costas might not be pulling your leg in describing it."

The obvious exception to all this is gymnastics, in the summer Olympics and ice skating in the winter Olympics. Once every four years everyone becomes an expert in these fields and cheers on our American favorites as though we'd been there all along and knew exactly what we were cheering for.

In my life, my fascination with gymnastics comes from the fact that I still can't believe anyone can voluntarily bend their bodies that way and then nonchalantly straighten up and keep going. I get absolutely wrapped up in watching for the moment when one of the gymnasts bends over into an impossible pose, suddenly gets a look of consternation on his or her face, and has to be carried from the gym twisted round like a pretzel.

But that never happens and so I find myself mesmerized by the battle

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Editor

DON'T FORGET: IT'S ...

Primary day

A LASKA VOTERS today will get the chance to participate in the only primary election poll that really matters, but unfortunately far too many will stay home, leaving the decisions to the rest of us.

The most attention-grabbing primary contest pits Republicans against Republicans in the U.S. Senate race. In the past few weeks, incumbent Sen. Lisa Murkowski and Mike Miller have taken off the gloves to slug it out in their race for the GOP November ballot nod. We've seen and Jim Dore have gotten scant attention in that race as the media focuses on the main event. Scott Kohlhaas is hoping to represent Alaska Libertarians in the November election, and Jerry Sanders and Daniel DeVardo are carrying the Alaskan Independence Party banner.

Senate Democratic hopeful Tony Knowles, ignoring the other candidates in his party's race — Don Wright and Theresa Norgle Obermeyer — seemingly has stepped up his advertising of late in a transparent attempt to help Miller in the GOP race. Rep. Don Young, Alaska's lone congressman, who is finishing up his 16th term in the U.S. House of Representatives, is the only Republican candidate on the ballot for that post.

The Democrats have fielded Frank Vanderhaar, Thomas Higgins and Dee Miles for Young's House seat. Alvin Anders is vying for the Libertarian vote and Timothy Feller is seeking the Green vote in that race.

But there is more. In addition to the few headline-grabbing races, there are a host of state House and Senate contests on today's ballot that deserve your attention.

We'll be going to the polls to vote for Murkowski and Young as we believe they will best represent Alaska's interests. Despite there being three possible ballots, we urge you to take a few moments to cast yours in those races and in the state House and Senate races that affect you.

Today is your day to exercise your rights and have your say

Best minds

THE WALL STREET Journal reports that Europe is losing some of its best minds to the United States.

A recent survey showed that more than 70 percent of Europeans receiving doctoral degrees from American universities between 1991 and 2000 are working in the United States and plan to remain.

Currently there are 100,000 European-born researchers here and an international commission warns that, by the end of this decade, Europe will have 700,000 fewer scientists and engineers than will be needed to compete in the global knowledge economy. Many of them will be in America.

The reason is apparently the high quality of teaching and research in the this country compared to Europe and the amount of money invested in research by the American private sector.

Repositioning troops long overdue

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

For 60 years, American troops in the tens of thousands have been sitting in Germany essentially where Eisenhower left them at the end of World War II. For 50 years, American troops in the tens of thousands have been sitting where Matthew Ridgway left them at the end of the Korean War. For three years, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has been making plans to undo this colossal folly.

Earlier this month, President Bush formally unveiled plans to withdraw 60,000 to 70,000 American troops from obsolete battle stations. Some are to come home. Others are to be redeployed to Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Southeast Asia to smaller, more flexible bases closer to the new front of the new war, the war on terrorism.

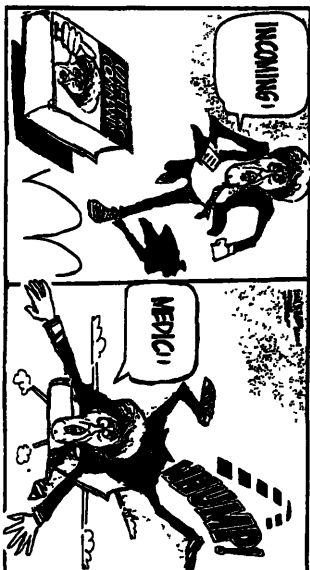
The move is long overdue. The U.S. military presence in Germany was meant to anchor an American commitment to defend Europe against Soviet invasion. The Soviet Union disappeared 13 years ago. What in God's name are three heavy divisions still doing there?

During the Cold War, their purpose was to keep America in Russia out and Germany down. Well, Russia is not exactly set to invade Europe. It is not America's job to keep Germany down. And America has other places its troops must more urgently go — places where many of its allies are not prepared to tread.

The Democratic response is a classic demonstration of reactionary liberalism, the reflexive defense of the status quo long after its raison d'être has evaporated. John Kerry adviser Wesley Clark protested vigorously, "As we face a global war on terror with Al Qaeda active in more than 60 countries, now is not the time to pull back our forces."

He cannot be serious. How exactly are the 72,000 American troops in Germany fighting al Qaeda? A lot of good they did in unsealing the al Qaeda cell in Hamburg that carried out the Sept. 11 attacks. This hugely expensive deployment — with its large legions and tens of thousands of dependents added to the bill — could be put to infinitely better use elsewhere.

Critics are particularly vociferous about drawing down 12,500 of our



troops in South Korea. We all know what our troops are doing there. They are intended to be sitting ducks. Thirty-seven thousand Americans are not going to repel a million-man North Korean army. Their purpose is to die in the first hours of a North Korean invasion — setting off a typhoon that forces the United States to enter the war.

This invitation to suicide might have made sense when South Korea was weak, impoverished and war-ravaged. Today it is an industrialized tiger with a large and superbly equipped army. It makes far more sense to reassign these troops to where they are really needed — to support weak, impoverished and war-ravaged countries in the Middle East whose governments cannot yet carry the burden of their own defense.

John Kerry claims that withdrawing troops will send "the wrong signal" in a confrontation with North Korea over its nuclear weapons. Where was he when the Clinton administration sent a signal of abject surrender to the North Koreans by offering two shiny new nuclear reactors, oil shipments and all kinds of diplomatic goodies in return for a paper promise to freeze their nuclear program — which they now brazenly and proudly claim to have broken long ago?

It is long past time that we reassign our defensive lines overseas to reflect the collapse of the Soviet Union. The United States still has 1,700 military personnel in Iceland. From whom, exactly, are we protecting Iceland? Or are we there to keep an eye on al Qaeda cells in Greenland?

Democrats accuse the administration of publicizing the redeployment by bringing it up as a campaign issue. This truly is precious. The Democrats turned their conversion into a four-day teach-in celebrating the Swift boats of the Melong River circa 1969 — and then questioned the legitimacy of raising as a campaign issue for the consideration of the nation the most significant redeployment of U.S. troops since the Korean War.

The president would have been culpable had he not brought it up. Not only is there an obvious policy difference between the two parties, but a president should put it on the table if he is to earn the mandate to carry out so radical a plan after the election.

The New York Times editorial page offered this reason for maintaining the status quo: Otherwise, "the military will also lose the advantage that comes with growing large numbers of its men and women the experience of living in other cultures." Seventy-thousand GIs parked in Stuttgart, practicing their German and listening to Wagner. Finally, a military deployment the New York Times can support.

Charles Krauthammer writes a weekly, nationally syndicated column for the Washington Post. His column is distributed by the Washington Post Writers Group. © Copyright 2003 The Washington Post Co.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

COASTAL TRAIL EXTENSION DESERVES ...

The heave-ho

HOMESOWNERS in the path of the proposed southern extension of the city's coastal trail and supporters of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge it threatens want a federal judge to declare illegal all proposed routes for the extension, making them illegible for federal funds.

The trail now runs about 11 miles from the downtown area to Kincaid Park, and the extension — touted at \$37 million, but likely closer to \$60 million — would take it 13 miles farther to Potters Marsh.

We wish extension opponents success in blocking this ill-conceived, expensive project designed as little more than a play area at the expense of a valuable refuge, a park and hard-earned private property.

The plaintiffs — shamelessly described as "selfish homeowners" by Eric McCallum, co-chairman of the so-called Friends of the Coastal Trail — are hoping to slam the door on federal funding for the project, which has a long, embarrassing and flawed history beginning with its planning in 1997. If eventually built, it will soak up this city's trails money for years to come.

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, after a long and politically tainted process, issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement with several alternatives. One of them was the "Orange Route," deemed "unreasonable" early on, but reinstated by then-Gov. Tony Knowles after a petition drive by his pals gave him the political cover he needed.

THEN CAME the Transportation Department's pick, the so-called "Orange Modified Preferred Alternative."

Property owners along that route, it turns out, were misled about its location and the Transportation Department all but ignored the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's concerns about the trail's potential impact on the refuge. The Transportation Department then failed to follow the rules as the lead agency on the project.

Now, trail backers are trying to tweak the "preferred" route and peddle it as new and improved.

Extension opponents say federal agencies erred in planning and, among other things, want a federal judge to:

- Decide whether federal bicycle transportation funds can be used for a route that principally is a recreation trail.
- Determine if the U.S. Department of Transportation overstepped its authority in adopting a nationwide waiver to allow such trails — placed nowhere near roadways — to be called transportation enhancements and receive federal funding.
- Whether this project qualifies as a transportation enhancement when it is not transportation related.
- Decide whether federal transportation funds can be used to build a bicycle path through Johns Park if there are feasible alternatives.

With any luck, a federal judge will pull the plug on the coastal extension as it is now planned.

More to say about evils of socialism

By **WALTER E. WILLIAMS**

Positive reader response to "Socialism Is Evil" was quite surprising.

That column argued that it was an immoral, not to mention unconstitutional, act for Congress, through the tax code, to subsidize the earnings of one American to give to another American in the form of prescription drugs, Social Security, food stamps, farm subsidies or airline bailouts. It's immoral because it frankly uses one person to serve the purposes of another. Indeed, that's one way to define slavery and other forms of servitude.

Several letters of disagreement interpreted my argument as being against taxation. They used the sleight-of-hand approach saying that we need taxation for national defense, the courts and other constitutionally authorized purposes as if that observation meant that taxation for any other purpose was just as legitimate. Let me be explicit: Taxes to finance certain federal activities are indeed legitimate as well as constitutional.



Williams

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution enumerates just what federal functions Congress has: taxing and spending authority. Among them are national defense, post offices and post roads, courts and a few other activities. Or, as James Madison, the Father of our Constitution, explained in Federalist Paper No. 45, "The powers delegated by the proposed Constitution to the federal government are few and defined."

Those which are to remain in the State governments are numerous and indefinite. The former will be exercised principally on external objects, as war, peace, negotiation and foreign commerce, with which last the power of taxation will, for the most part, be connected."

Nowhere in our Constitution is there even a hint of authority for most of what Congress taxes and spends for today. Don't be tricked by those who'd argue that Congress has such authority under the Constitution's "general welfare"

GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS



clause James Madison explained, "With respect to the two words 'general welfare,' I have always regarded them as qualified by the detail of powers connected with them."

Thomas Jefferson said, "Congress has not unlimited powers to provide for the general welfare, but only those specifically enumerated." The "detail of powers" or those "specifically enumerated" refer to what's actually laid out in the Constitution. The Framers had the foresight to see that these powers might need modification. That's why they gave us Article V as a means to amend the Constitution.

One reader criticized, "The essence of democracy is that the will of the majority conveys legitimacy to actions of the state." That's a sad commentary on both understanding and education. The Founders didn't intend for us to be a democracy but instead a republic. But more importantly, majority rule often carries an aura of legitimacy to acts that would otherwise be deemed tyranny. Let's look at it:

Consider a few everyday decisions such as whom we marry, what food we eat, where we live and what clothes we wear. How many of us would want majority rule to determine those decisions?

Walter E. Williams is a professor at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va. His column is distributed by Creators Syndicate Inc., 6777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90046, (310) 357-7000.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Editor

Sunday, August 22, 2004 F-3

KNOWLES TEAM PLAYS...

Smathers' game

"Are you aware that Claude Pepper is known all over Washington as a shameless extortionist? Not only that, but this man is reliably reported to practice nepotism with his sister-in-law, and he has a sister who was once a thespian in unhealed New York. Worst of all, it is an established fact that Mr. Pepper, before his marriage, he habitually practiced seduction."

— Speech attributed by Times magazine to George Smathers in his 1960 Florida U.S. Senate primary campaign against Pepper.

THE SLICK Democratic outsiders sent here by party officials to help U.S. Senate hopeful Tony Knowles in his campaign against incumbent Sen. Lisa Murkowski must think Alaskans are yokels.

Judging from recent attack ads claiming Murkowski voted several times against "needing veterans' programs" one can almost expect anything from the Knowles campaign, even a Smathers-like classic. You can almost see it. "You know," Knowles could say, staring into the camera, his wide, toothy grin fading into a frown of concern, "Lisa Murkowski is a homo sapiens and is known to masturbate."

Now that would be an ad to write home about — and it would be refreshingly accurate. (Translation: she is a human being who chews her food.)

The truth of the Knowles claims? The votes questioned by his distortion machine were attempts by Democrats to bust the federal budget, add to the deficit and increase your taxes.

One of the votes would have tossed out the entire budget and replaced it with a Democratic substitute. Another would have created a federal slush fund with no guarantee that the money would be used for veterans health care. How is that voting against veterans?

MURKOWSKI OFFERED an amendment to the fiscal year 2005 budget that adds \$1.2 billion in veterans' health care by shifting funds from other sources — and without increasing taxes.

Sens. Ted Stevens, a World War II veteran, and John McCain, a former Vietnam prisoner of war and a national hero, sided with Murkowski on seven of the votes. In a committee vote to allow veterans to use Medicare to get prescriptions, Stevens and McCain could not vote because they were not committee members.

In light of that, you have to wonder: Is Knowles, by extension, publicly accusing Alaska's senior senator and McCain of being soft on veterans' issues? If that is the case, he should step up and say so.

Stevens says the Democrats' amendments were "strangely political" and he promised to speak out against such misleading ads in the future.

Mandatory and discretionary funding for veterans, by the way, is at \$70.4 billion in 2004, up from \$47 billion three years ago.

So much for huckstering the rubes.

Good things abound in Portland

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

PORTLAND, Ore. — There are more things to like than dislike in Portland. Ditto the whole state of Oregon, for that matter. But it's a funny mix. Crazy politics, but some good people involved. A gorgeous coast, with Pacific ocean waves crashing ashore, towering green bluffs rising on the inland side of the sandy beaches, and lovely cities like Cannon Beach. But there's a full share of scenery in other parts of the state that won't win many prizes for beauty.

FORGET THE DOWNSIDE, however, which really is pretty stunning. Good things abound here, and Portland and its environs remain one of the great getaway attractions south of Anchorage.

Three of the same old things in Seattle? Disappointed by the dreadful Mariner baseball season? Sick of the scandals involving the Huskies football program at the University of Washington? Weary of the crowds at Sea-Tac International Airport? Pass 'em all by with a short, connecting flight to Portland International.



Tobin

port, one of the most user-friendly in the country.

DOWNTOWN PORTLAND gleams with a sparkling skyline, gardens and flowers, soaring bridges over the Willamette River, upscale stores, micro breweries, coffee shops galore, superb restaurants and many fine hotels with great rooms, great views, and great prices — assuming you're present in negotiating the best deal. The new Hilton Executive Towers is a nifty addition to the center of town, and has become one of Portland's busiest convention and business centers. The Heathman, the Western, the Benson, the Marriott City Center, Embassy Suites, the 5th Avenue Suites, and the Yards Plaza are just a few of the better places to lay your head.

AS FOR THE bridges, major rebuilding work continues on schedule on the four that span the Willamette in the



"Stay away from those wooden ones. I nearly got my head blown off!"

downtown area. The most scenic, the soaring St. Johns suspension bridge, is in the midst of a \$39 million renovation, the biggest since it opened in 1931 — a job that won't be completed until the fall of next year. Lesser work continues on the Morrison and Shreve Island bridges, while a \$28 million project to install new decking on the lift spans of the Broadway Bridge will keep it closed to traffic for another couple of weeks.

AS HAS BEEN mentioned here in previous reports from the Rose City, Ron Saxton remains one of the bright Portland lawyers' stars. Lyman, lived in Anchorage when she was a growing girl, the daughter of Ken Hume and his late wife, Barbara. As many will recall, the Humes were Anchorage residents for more than a quarter of a century before his retirement and their move back here, their old home town. Among other things during his Anchorage years, he served as president of the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce in 1976 and in real life was the managing partner of the three Danny's restaurants here.

SAXTON, WHO HAS a number of major law clients in Alaska, made a strong bid for the 2002 Republican gubernatorial nomination, and lost by a narrow margin. He's considered a sure bet to make another run for the GOP

and two years from now. To keep the not bubbling, his name and his face are in public view through a weekly newspaper column and a regular guest commentary on a Portland TV station's evening newscast.

SAXTON'S WIFE is no slouch on the civic scene, either. She's up front and center stage as executive director of the Christie School, a well-respected home for handicapped and troubled children. She was honored 10 days ago at a 50th birthday party, staged in the Portland Rose Garden, home of the Portland Trail Blazers of the National Basketball Association. The celebration, attended by 2,500 of her closest friends, was a charity affair, with proceeds going to all kinds of nonprofit organizations throughout the city and the state.

UNFORTUNATELY, the state's political scene suffered an ugly blow some weeks ago when Neil Goldschmidt fell into public disgrace after submitting he had a long affair with a baby-sitter that began when she was 14 years old and he was the 35-year-old mayor of Portland. Most recently, the former governor — and former secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation — was one of the state's most prominent business and civic leaders. At least, he was, before local newspapers exposed his hidden past. Goldschmidt, for the record, is now married to Dana Snowden, whose former husband, Art Snowden, was the long-time administrator of the Alaska Court System before his retirement some years ago.

BUT SUCH SORDID stuff aside, Portland is terrific. And it's also an easy launch pad to attractions in southern Washington state. Just a few miles north of downtown, Interstate 5 crosses the Columbia River at Juanita Beach, and Vancouver, Wash., is just minutes away. An easy drive a couple of hours farther on, through some scenic vistas along the way, is Olympia, Washington's capital city. All in all, it's a pretty good place for Alaskans to escape the Seattle routine.

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

PARTISAN POLITICS HANDICAPS ...

The spy game

THE POLITICIANS began during the minute President Bush nominated Rep. Porter Goss as the new head of the Central Intelligence Agency. The mean-spirited gypses were just another example of the divisive attitude that demoralizes even the best of efforts to keep the country on course.

In this case, the yelps from the Democratic left — and from a number of backers of Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry — accused the president of turning the CIA into a partisan arm of the administration. Good grief!

An even sadder aspect to this is that the back-biting accusations would have been made no matter who the president picked to succeed George Tenet, who resigned effective July 11.

No matter these voices from the fringe of the election year campaign trail.

The fact is that Goss is a Republican congressman from Florida — and has been for the last 16 years. But his record as a member also includes service the last eight years as chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, which means he is up to speed on many of the grave threats facing the country.

But more than that, he has first-hand, front-line, up-close-and-personal knowledge of intelligence gathering operations more than a decade as an undercover agent — two years with Army intelligence and later with the CIA's Directorate of Operations, assigned primarily in Europe and Latin America.

In this day and age, it's a very good thing that someone with his background and experience is in charge of the CIA. We trust his confirmation by the Senate will come quickly.

Four honored

OUR SINCERE congratulations go to the four Alaskans honored last week for their contributions to the Alaska conservation movement.

Lowell Thomas Jr. and Peg Thieson of Anchorage and Jim and Mary Lou King of Juneau received lifetime achievement awards from the Alaska Conservation Foundation.

We have often disagreed with Alaska's environmentalists and continue to do so on a regular basis, but it is only fair to acknowledge the contributions these four have made to the quality of life in this state.

Among the projects in which they played key roles were establishment of Chugach State Park and greenbelts in Anchorage, recognition of critical watershed habitat in the Yukon Flats and more.

One of the strengths of a democracy is that public decisions often result from the dynamic tension between opposing viewpoints. These four are often contrarians but their success demonstrates that the results can sometimes be beneficial to the Alaska community as a whole.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Letters to The Times

Burning not necessary

I live in the Wasilla area and in my neighborhood this week visibility has been about a quarter of a mile and those with asthma have had a tough time. A goodly portion of this mess is the responsibility of Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

We all know this has been a hot, dry, dusty summer. We have had nearly a hundred naturally caused wildfires and some 2 million acres actively on fire. A fantastic amount of smoke has drifted into the Anchorage and Mat-Su areas.

Our firefighting resources, stretched to the breaking point, had to accept help from the Lower 48. The natural (unavoidable) fires caused the Department of Environment Conservation to issue an air quality alert statewide.

On Aug. 17, I was shocked to find that the smoke in my neighborhood was so thick it looked like heavy fog and smelled strongly of wood smoke. I was not pleased to discover that, with all of our other fire and smoke problems, BLM deliberately set a prescribed burn.

I realize that "controlled" burns are needed to thin out the underbrush and reduce the risk of large runaway fires. I'm not an "expert" on fires, but I do know that if one looks up and finds the sky already full of smoke drifting toward the population centers, it probably isn't a bright idea to light yet another fire.

Chon people, we've burned enough land for one year. Use your heads and put away the matches.

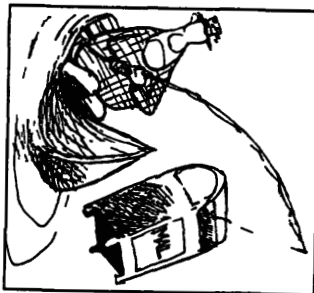
W E Crut
Wasilla

Will of people ignored

It appears The Voice, and not the will of the people, supports another taxpayer-funded election to overturn the very recently defeated school bond propositions. Are we starting a new trend here? Are taxpayers and voters not being heard?

Anchorage property owners do not support a taxpayer-supported town center. Schools do not anchor any form of economic benefit when the only benefit is increased taxation.

As a property owner, taxpayer, and to come to this great nation illegally? Will



voter, I do not look forward to an increased military presence in Anchorage, increased high-density housing, increased welfare, increased crime, increased social programs and especially increased taxation.

Clinton R. Hodges II
Anchorage

Programs have price tag

Candidate Kerry is quick to denounce the sitting President for a plan of moving our troops from self-sustaining countries back to our homeland in order to better protect the populace and react quickly to threats worldwide.

His trained dog, Howard Dean, claims that any warnings of imminent danger from terrorists is simply a political ploy, rather than an honest warning to be vigilant of a future attack. His message is that help and "hope" is on the way in what form? Retraction?

This country must attack various issues, including Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and illegal immigration. These four issues alone cost the country more than the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan combined, and yet Kerry claims that he can maintain the war on terror AND pay for these programs simply by leaving only those that make \$200,000 or more? Does the candidate honestly expect this to happen?

Will Kerry insist upon paying others to come to this great nation illegally? Will

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

Kerry insist upon giving full benefits to those that have not contributed in any form to the right to "earn" these benefits? President Bush supports the right to have the opportunity to pursue these things, but not the expectation of them. Entitlements do not exist within the Constitution, nor should they exist within the development of our nation.

Earn your keep, deserve your reward, expect nothing but what you can achieve, and only rely upon others when you truly need it.

Randy Lee Hartman
Anchorage

Ben Hilliker remembered

In the May 22 Voice of the Times, Vern Wiggins wrote a tribute to Ben Hilliker (1932-2004). I met Ben, a tall, gray-haired gentleman with piercing eyes, in 2001 at the Rabbit Creek Hole Range. Ben had been a deputy commissioner in the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, an environmental activist for Alyeska Pipeline, and a Korean War veteran. We shared a belief that resource development was compatible with maintaining wildlife. We were members of "The Wildlife Society," which endorsed an advocacy position opposing development in ANWR.

Ben and I disagreed with this position, and wrote an alternative position that appeared in the October 2001 issue of the Society's Alaska Chapter newsletter, "The Alaskan Wildlifer." Ben and I felt that biologists in the organization should not advocate either for or against development of public resources.

We agreed that biologists in the organization should help achieve management objectives identified by the people through elected representatives, not personal objectives. We received criticism from other biologists for this view, but with Ben's courage and conviction we held firm.

Ben passed away in April and I respected and miss him. He was part of the Greatest Generation, and passed honor and inspiration to this one.

Matthew A. Cronin
Anchorage

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

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MORE ALARMISM OVER ...

NANA mine

YET ANOTHER environmental scare has proven to be unjustified alarmism.

The state Division of Public Health has issued a report reassuring people living near the Red Dog zinc mine that berries and greens from the area are perfectly safe.

The false alarm was issued in June by Alaska Community Action on Toxics, an environmental, sky-is-falling group based in Anchorage. It claimed that berries and greens collected from villagers living in the mine area had very high levels of lead and were unsafe to consume.

Apparently its warning was based in part on a Department of Environmental Conservation spreadsheet that contained for-malting errors.

"In fact," state health officials reported, "Point Hope salmonberries contained the lowest levels of lead detected in berries."

The state agency also said that concentrations of heavy metals in water, soil, carbon, fish and berry samples collected from the area of the mine pose no public health hazards to residents of Kivalina and Noatak, the two closest villages to the site. Noatak is 45 miles from the mine and Kivalina is about 17 miles from its loading port.

State health officials said residents of the two villages should continue unrestricted harvest and consumption of subsistence foods throughout Northwest Alaska.

THEY NOTED that the public is excluded from the mine's port area, where soil samples contain higher concentrations of lead and zinc. Most were apparently deposited there before the mine operators began hauling ore in sealed containers rather than open trucks.

The National Park Service reported that some lead dust has drifted over tundra in the area, but at low-enough levels that it will not affect subsistence foods. Such dust is heavy and unlikely to drift far from its source.

Red Dog is a joint venture of NANA Regional Corp. and Teck Cominco, a Canadian mining company. It is the largest employer in the Kotzebue area and produces 6 percent of the world's zinc supply.

Heavy metals are potentially harmful substances and their impact on the environment and subsistence foods needs to be monitored by health agencies. That is being done and the results have been very encouraging.

What is not needed is unfounded alarmism by environmental scare groups.

As a mine official put it, the false assertion that subsistence foods in the region are unsafe to eat, "is a very irresponsible statement and is simply not the truth."

Fat cats Kerry and Edwards worry dog

By TOM BRENNAN

People are asking whether my dog Jack will abandon the Democratic Party just because he is unenthused about John Kerry.

He hasn't signaled his intentions either way so far, but I just can't see him as a Republican. He still has the Fran Ulmer for Governor sticker on his food dish. In that regard he is probably a good Democrat, kind of handouts.

He isn't all that impressed either by Sen. John Edwards, Kerry's running mate. When a trial lawyer like Edwards comes on the television, Jack growls and his hair stands on end, probably because so many trial lawyers are suing people over dog bites these days. And collecting big money.

In fairness, I don't think Edwards was ever a dog-bite lawyer. He became a millionaire many times over by suing doctors and hospitals in North Carolina, getting humongous awards, driving the cost of medical malpractice insurance through the roof.

Bankrupting doctors and driving them out of the state, and helping out North Carolina's health-care system in deep kumbees.



Jack is worried that a guy like Edwards knows the legal and political systems and can play them like a violin. The would-be vice president once dramatized the events of a birth by speaking to jurors as if he were an unborn baby, begging for help, begging to be let out of the womb. In such cases, Edwards and his aggrieved clients were generally awarded the bank account and PIN numbers for the doctor's insurance companies.

As USA Today puts it, Edwards has "youthful good looks, personal charisma and a golden tongue. But don't worry, New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof said the senator will 'tear up' with the Democrats' most crucial task: reconnecting the party to Middle America voters."



My dog figures a violinist like that might not be the best man to play second fiddle in the Oval Office. He will admit, however, that a guy with such a persuasive line of b's might be a good one to sic on the French, especially when the United States needs a deal on wine or cheese.

Jack is also wallfing in his position on Kerry. I can tell. Lately he has been looking at an Internet Web site named ScaryJohnKerry.com, which shows — among other things — the multimillion-dollar homes Kerry and his wife Teresa own in Fannyivan, Idaho, the Georgetown section of Washington, and in Boston and Nantucket.

He doesn't say anything, but I can tell the dog is looking at those pictures and then around at our house and thinking, "So what is a classy dog like me doing in a dump like this?"

I suggested he lose the attitude before my wife got home. She isn't understanding about dogs or rich liberals the way I am.

Anchorage Mayor Mark Begich announced last week that he is increasing the size of the bureaucracy in order to

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save money. That may make sense — he is setting up a purchasing authority to control and coordinate city buying and reduce costs. Hazzoner estimates the authority could save a minimum of \$7 million in its first year.

Creation of the authority came after a six-month study by the seven-member staff of the city's new Division of Efficiency. Within a municipal bureaucracy, such a division seems like a contradiction in terms, it smacks a bit of the classic Department of Redundancy Department.

Speaking of which, Attorney General Gregg Rinkes announced that he is joining the attorneys general of 41 other states in asking Congress to make improvements in the proposed Junk Fix Prevention Act. They want to make it tougher for companies to send out unsolicited solicitations.

Naturally Rinkes' office wrote up a press release on the subject and sent it to the news media, most received it both by e-mail and fax.

Tom Brennan is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Thursday, August 19, 2004 B-5

KNOWLES AD DRAWS ...

Lisa's fire

LISA MURKOWSKI is really steamed. The Republican senator is furious at Tony Knowles for claiming that she votes against veterans.

She is no fan of Democrat Knowles anyway, but her latest displeasure stems from his badmouthing her on veterans issues and a television ad that she says unfairly criticizes her record on health care and other programs to benefit veterans. Her claim is backed up by Sen. Ted Stevens, a World War II veteran who voted with her on the issues Knowles is complaining about. Stevens said the amendments they voted against were ploys by Democrats to kill the veterans' bill.

The Knowles commercial refers to eight Senate votes on veterans programs. One was to allow veterans to use Medicare to get prescriptions filled and to open more slots for military in Veterans Administration hospitals.

She said in a public statement that the other seven votes "were procedural votes on whether or not to waive the rules of the Budget Act — not debates on whether or not veterans deserve care, and not votes against veterans. I am personally very offended that Tony Knowles would mislead Alaskans into thinking that I am against funding for veterans."

"He is playing politics with the very serious matter of caring for our veterans. We owe every degree of service we can offer to our veterans and I have personally worked with my committee in the Senate (the Veterans Affairs Committee) and with the president to do more for our veterans than any other administration in history."

So if you were thinking about inviting Lisa Murkowski and Tony Knowles to the same social function, forget about it.

Still creating news

WALTER CRONKITE has decided on yet another career change.

The most trusted person on television, who is more or less retired from broadcasting and recently finished up a year as a newspaper columnist, will now focus on television documentaries and speeches.

At age 87, after a long and distinguished career, Cronkite can do just about what he wants. And he will.

Shortly before his final column was published, Cronkite told Reuters that he was frustrated by the time limitations of daily newscasting. Noting that a half-hour broadcast contains only 17 minutes of news, he said it's "patently impossible" to do justice to most important news stories.

His point is valid and important. The nation makes far too many decisions based on superficial impressions and inadequate information.

Cronkite offered no solution and perhaps there may be none, at least for the moment.

Kerry offers no fix for Social Security

By MICHAEL TANNER

When it comes to Social Security reform, John Kerry is clear about what he is against. "I will not privatize Social Security," he declared in his acceptance speech to the Democratic National Convention. "I will not cut benefits."

The Democratic Party as a whole takes the same position through its party platform. Democrats believe in the progressive, guaranteed benefit that has ensured that seniors and people with disabilities receive a benefit not subject to the whims of the market or the economy. We oppose privatizing Social Security or raising the retirement age.

It is a clear, resonating message that says absolutely nothing about what Sen. Kerry or the Democrats would do to solve Social Security's looming financial crisis.

Yet Social Security will start running a deficit — spending more money on benefits than it takes in through taxes — in less than 15 years. By 2018, according to the last report of Social Security Trustees.

The so-called Social Security Trust Fund, which is supposed to help pay benefits until 2042, in reality contains only government bonds, essentially an IOU. While few people doubt that those benefits will ultimately be paid, the federal government will still have to find the money to pay them.

And a lot of money it is. In 2018, the first year that Social Security faces a shortfall, the cash deficit will exceed \$17 billion. That's almost as much as Kerry has proposed in increased spending on Pell Grants.

By 2022, the annual Social Security deficit will have grown to roughly \$100 billion, as much as Kerry would spend for a proposed energy trust, increased veterans benefits, fully funding Head Start, and increased spending on homeland security.

By 2027, with the annual deficit approaching \$200 billion, you can add in his proposed increases in aid to state and local governments, his national service plan, and science and technology research. And so it goes.

Overall, Social Security now faces



unfunded liabilities in excess of \$26 trillion. One has to wonder where Kerry plans to get the money.

Actually, it is all too clear where the money will come from. As former President Bill Clinton pointed out, there are really only three options for Social Security reform: raise taxes, cut benefits, or invest privately. Since Sen. Kerry rules out private investment or benefit cuts, he could legitimately be accused of implicitly endorsing tax increases.

And mightily big tax increases they would have to be. A 50 percent increase in the payroll tax or the equivalent. This would be a tax hike far higher than what Kerry would "save" by rolling back parts of President Bush's tax cuts — even if he hadn't already promised to use those savings to fund other government spending.

Not that financing is the only problem with Social Security. The program already provides today's workers with a low, below-market return on their tax contributions to the program. The program unfairly penalizes African-Americans, working women and others.

Workers don't own their money or have any guaranteed right to their benefits.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Wednesday, August 18, 2004 B-5

ALASKA'S TREASURY TO BOLGE WITH ...

Oil dollars

IT LOOKS LIKE Alaska is headed for a green Christmas.

We're not talking about any long-range forecast for a Yuletide without snow, we mean a 2004 holiday season with bundles of green money flowing into the state treasury from oil royalties and leases.

Crude oil prices on the world market are breaking records and seem likely to stay high at least through the end of the year, perhaps longer. Though that could create economic malaise in many parts of the world, it means Alaska's treasury will be bulging with cash, at least in the near term. And that suggests the long-feared fiscal gap will be pushed back for at least another year. State officials project that, at worst, the state is likely to see either a small deficit or a small surplus. And with a little luck, the surplus could be even larger.

A barrel of crude oil now is selling for more than \$44, nearly twice its lowest price in 2003. And some experts predict the price will go higher yet before it goes lower. (Though that is normally the highest level in history, it is actually lower, when adjusted for inflation, than in the 1980s after the Iranian revolution.)

There is no guarantee that Alaska's financial situation will be as boundless as now projected. Oil prices are notoriously volatile and are affected by both supply and demand, which are affected by the political situation and the health of the world economy.

AT THE MOMENT, the world is facing a supply pinch because of increasing consumption in many countries, especially in fast-growing China. But as fuel costs go up, demand can shrink and the price would then drop.

China's growth is coming with its development as a capitalist society under a nominally communist government. There are many reasons why that growth could prove fragile — and high fuel costs could be a difficult test.

But the world is a changing place and changes in the energy sector are leading the trend. For one thing, OPEC — long the powerhouse in the petroleum world — won't be in a position to tame prices at least through next year.

At present, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries has relatively little spare capacity, which it needs to make 13 million barrels a day in spare capacity, claims to amount. Alaska's production has fallen since its peak — and a little more than what ANWR could potentially provide.

Saudi Arabia has vast undeveloped oil reserves, but, drilling the necessary wells and building production facilities can't be accomplished overnight. By some estimates it could be two years before the Saudis could put enough production on line to seriously dampen rising prices.

So though the long-term situation is not predictable, the near-term prospects for Alaska's treasury look favorable indeed.

Five words protect countless lives

By ELISE PATKOTAK

I've reached an age when I scan the obituaries every day to see how many people my age have died and what they died from. I feel horribly cheated if the cause of death is left out because then I can't take any comfort in the fact that I don't have that disease or don't engage in that activity which somehow translates into my mind as a reason why I won't die soon.

I am buoyed when the majority of the people in the obituaries are over 70. I have a distance to go before I get there — though not such a distance that I can feel competent. When the majority of obituaries are people in my age bracket, I get nervous. Those who have died after a long illness ally that somewhat but those who died of "natural causes" in their sleep cause my anxiety level to soar.

I wonder how long it would take someone to find me if that happened. I wonder how my buds and dog would fare till I was found. I find myself sleeping with one eye open for the most few nights, as though I could see death coming and somehow avoid it till I called someone to let the dog out in the morning.



Patkotak

But the worse obituaries to read are those of the young — babies who never reached their first birthday, young children who are vented by God with some horrible illness that cuts them down before they've had a chance to conquer a two wheel bike, young adults with their whole lives left to plan who suddenly have no life left.

I don't read obituaries from other states. I'm not that crazy yet. So I don't really know how we actually compare to other places when it comes to the death of our youth.

It seems to me that I've read enough statistics to know that Alaska is a pretty rough place to live in if you want to live out your allotted life span. Accidents, whether from guns, cars or boats, seem to take a heavy toll on our population, especially our young population.



Some of those accidents are an inevitable part of the lifestyle lived in Alaska. We are still, in the end, a frontier. Once you leave the environs of the three or four urban areas of the state, you are in wilderness where survival often means engaging in activities that can be very dangerous no matter how many safety precautions are used. To the extent that we love this state and the variety of lifestyles it allows us, we accept a certain amount of death and carnage as the inevitable byproduct.

But here's what I can't accept. I can't accept the death of anyone, and especially a young person, due to an accident in which alcohol is a factor.

It's not as though there is anyone left in this entire country who hasn't been exposed to the fact that drinking and guns, drinking and boats, drinking and cars, drinking and snowmobiles, drinking and ATVs, do not make for a healthy mix. Put them in any sort of proximity and they are invariably grounds for a tragic explosion of some kind.

Since I deal with people in my work as a guardian ad litem who have severe substance abuse problems, I try very hard to be understanding of just how overwhelming those addictions can be. Walking away from them, taking control of your life back from them, is a

Herculean task that you have to wake up and repeat every day of your life. Relapse, as happy and, as we so often tell people, the most important thing is to get back on the wagon immediately. I truly believe all of that right up until I got a call that a young man in Barrow is dead and the driver of the truck that hit his motorcycle was arrested for drunken driving. And I hear the anguish in his aunt's voice at the loss and know I don't even want to talk to the parents yet because of the intense pain I will hear in theirs.

Then I find myself not caring too much about rehabilitation. I find myself wishing justice. I find myself wanting this drunken driver to never be allowed on a public road again unless he is handcuffed and in the back of a locked police van. I don't want to know about the driver's potential for the future if he wakes up. I can only focus on the potential future that has been lost.

Drinking and driving don't mix. Five simple words. None of them more than two syllables. How hard can they possibly be to understand?

Elise Patkotak, an Anchorage free-lance writer and author of Parallel Logic, a narrative book back at her 28 years in Barrow, lives in Anchorage and owns Precious Corp. She is a writer/graphics company.

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VOTERS GET ANOTHER SHOT AT ...

School bonds

IF THE ANCHORAGE School District has its way, voters this fall will get to decide on \$82 million in bonds to build a new middle school in the Muldoon area and renovate several others.

The district is seeking about \$52 million for the new school and \$30 million for renovations to other schools. It would require a special election costing taxpayers perhaps as much as \$100,000.

With the military increasing its presence in the Anchorage area in the next two years by at least 2,000 personnel, and with population on the East side of town growing by leaps and bounds, the argument for a new school, in our view, is valid, and there can be little argument that renovations to several other schools are long overdue.

There are 11 relocatables at Wendler Middle School and 11 more at Clark Middle School. They and Central Middle School are at, or over, capacity. A new school in the Muldoon area would allow the district to redraw boundaries for the three, equalizing their student populations and allowing many military students to attend school nearer their homes.

Voters in 1999 approved funding to buy a 31-acre site near the Creekside Town Center and to pay for planning design. The bonds sought now would pay for construction.

THE ICING on the cake, in the district's view, is that if voters approve the bonds before Dec. 31, the Legislature may reimburse the district up to 70 percent of the cost. The lack of certainty in reimbursing the district will be a sticking point for some who fear taxpayers will be handed the entire bill. But if state lawmakers do approve such a reimbursement — and it is more than likely they would — the tax bill on a \$100,000 house would increase by about \$13 a year.

All of that said, if the school district wins Assembly approval, it may face tough sledding with voters who in April rejected a pair of major school bonds. One of those bonds was for a new \$30 million school district headquarters, which drew fire from every political quarter, and the other, for about \$96 million, was to pay for the new Muldoon school and several renovation projects.

In the past, this community generally has supported bonds for new schools, along with repairs and renovations of existing facilities. Some say the district's twice-failed effort to consolidate its administrative staff under one roof to save money irritated many voters. Others attribute the failure of the bonds to their staggering amount.

How the public would receive the proposed bonds is hard to gauge. At a recent School Board public hearing on the bond proposals, however, not a single member of the public testified. Not one.

The School Board's bonds proposal will go before the Assembly on Tuesday and a public hearing is likely on Sept. 7.

McCain-Feingold law didn't help

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

You wanted campaign finance reform. You got campaign finance reform. McCain-Feingold promised to take the money out of politics. If you believed that, you deserve what you got.

And what you got is an avalanche of money into politics this year as George Soros, Democratic big shot and, to a lesser extent, Republican moneyman (Republicans are slower on the uptake) get into the business of "independent" political expenditures.

All that McCain-Feingold did was make it impossible to make huge personal contributions to political parties. But if you have far more money than you can ever hope to spend, what to do? Buy another Gulfstream V? No. Play an even more important role in politics by bankrolling your very own "527," a tax-code loophole that enables the fat cats to fund their own political advertising so long as they do not "coordinate" with the candidate.

The ads have another restriction: They cannot advocate voting for anyone. I love that part, for two reasons. First, it produces comical scripts that say, "President Bush, friend of Halliburton, likes taking food from the mouths of orphans. If you think that is not nice, vote for me." Second, the ads buyers mean "Vote Kerry." But they cannot say so.

Second, I like the poster justice. The go-go do-gooders who endorsed campaign finance reform have another great cause: the awfulness of negative campaigning. Well, they have produced a system that is practically designed to produce negative ads.

So first, you get some-funded Bush-the-monster ads. Now you get the Swift Boat Veterans for Truth ad (and book) accusing John Kerry of falsifying his military record.

The Democrats have reacted to the swift boat vets with anguish and selective indignation. This assault was bankrolled by rich Bush supporters, they charge. No kidding. Where else would swift boat vets get the money? With the exception of the romantic few who serially marry millionaire heiresses, swift boaters are generally of modest means.



means where are they going to get the cash to be heard? Hardly, huh?

The Democrats next charge that the very idea of attacking the military service of a heroic American is disgraceful. On this there are two points. The "heroic" part is precisely what is at issue here, and the swift boat veterans who themselves served honorably have some questions about it.

More important, who brought up Kerry's military record in the first place? If Kerry had not made his Vietnam service the very centerpiece of his campaign — "I'm John Kerry and I'm reporting for duty," this attack on his record could hardly be deemed scandalous muckraking. But if you run as a war hero, your claims of heroism are far grays.

These vets have the perfect right to publish their book and do their ad. But are they right? Did Kerry rescue Jim Rasmussen under fire, as Rasmussen recalls, or in perfect calm, as a vet on a nearby swift boat recalls? We don't know. We can never know. I have no doubt of the sincerity of both recollections, but in the fog of war, as anyone who has read any military history knows, there are widely varying recollections of what actually happened at the front.

Politically, though, I think the whole swift boat campaign is not very smart. It focuses attention on Kerry's one strong point. The man has nothing to say about his next 30 years. His own politics, remember?

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

A SIMPLE MESSAGE: GREENPENCE...

Go home

AT LEAST SEN. Lisa Murkowski, among all the flock of those running for the U.S. Senate, has told Greenpeace activists to get lost.

Where are these others who want the job now held by Lass? Surely they don't approve of what these Outsiders are up to with their usual antics — chaining themselves to bulldozers and putting up roadblocks in an illegal attempt to stop what little timber industry remains in the Tongass National Forest.

Yet what is afoot here is another publicity stunt, aimed to stir up well-meaning but pitifully misinformed people — and a cluster of incompetent editors and writers in the media — into believing that Alaska's huge Southeastern forest is being pillaged.

The assertion is nonsense, of course. The massive forest, which embraces 16.9 million acres, has hardly been touched by the timber industry.

The truth is that more than 95 percent of the Tongass is off limits to logging. Despite contentions to the contrary, the Tongass is one of the best-managed forests in the world.

ENVIRONMENTAL activists, however, have virtually eradicated lumber jobs in Southeast — aided by outrageous Clinton-era programs that have devastated the economy in the area.

Sen. Murkowski, in an angry reaction to the latest Greenpeace headline-grabbing efforts, put it plainly:

"I demand that Alaskans be allowed to earn a living." Her point is well taken. A press release she issued a couple of days ago said:

"Between 1994 and 2002, Alaska lost 1,900 jobs in the timber industry. Much of the losses occurred following the unlawful application of the Clinton roadless rule to the Tongass."

Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman announced on July 12 a new proposal that would overturn the roadless rule, replacing it with a policy that would permit governors to petition the federal government if they wish to keep certain areas roadless in national forests in their respective states.

Noted the Murkowski statement.

Tony Knowles, who was governor from 1994 to 2002, is on record as supporting roadless processes.

You wouldn't know that to hear Knowles on the campaign trail today. He's busy these days airing a new television commercial boasting about all the jobs he created as governor. Tell that to the people of Southeast Alaska.

If there's a benefit, there's a price

By WALTER WILLIAMS

Economic ignorance allows us to fall easy prey to political charlatans and demagogues, so how about a little Economics 101?

How many times have we heard "free tuition," "free health care," and free you-name-it? If a particular good or service is truly free, we can have as much of it as we want without the sacrifice of other goods or services.

Take a "free" library, is it really free? The answer is no. Had the library not been built, that \$50 million could have purchased something else. That something else sacrificed is the cost of the library. While users of the library might pay a zero price, zero price and free are not one and the same.

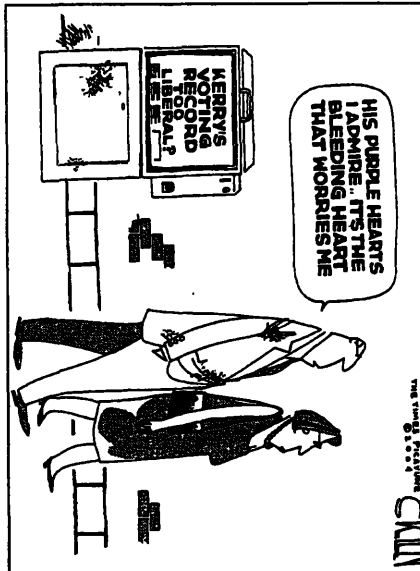
So, when politicians talk about providing something free, ask them to identify the beneficiary Santa Claus or tooth fairy.

It's popular to condemn greed, but it's greed that gets wonderful things done. When I say greed, I don't mean stealing, fraud, misrepresentation, or other forms of dishonesty. I mean people trying to get as much as they can for themselves.

We don't give second thought to the many wonderful things others do for us. Detroit assembly-line workers get up at the crack of dawn to produce the car that you enjoy. Farm workers toil in the blazing sun gathering grapes for our wine. Snowplow drivers brave blizzards just so we can have access to our roads.

Do you think these people make these personal sacrifices because they care about us? My bet is that they don't give a hoot. Instead, they along with their bosses do these wonderful things for us because they want more for themselves.

People in the education and political establishments pretend they're not motivated by such "callous" motives as greed and profits. These people "care" about us, but from which areas of our



lives do we derive the greatest pleasures and have the fewest complaints, and from which areas do we have the greatest headaches and complaints?

We tend to have a high satisfaction level with goods and services like computers, cell phones, movies, clothing and supermarkets. These are areas where the motivations are greed and profits.

Our greatest dissatisfaction is in areas of caring and no-profit motives, such as public education, postal services and politics. Give me greed and profits, and you can keep the caring.

How about the idea that, if it saves just one life it's worth it? That's some of the stated justification for government mandates for childproof medicine bottles, gun locks, bike helmets and all sorts of warning labels.

No doubt there's a benefit to these government mandates, but if we only look at benefits, we'll do damn near anything because there's always a benefit to any action.

For example, why not have a congressionally mandated 5 miles per hour legally speed limit? According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, there were 43,220 highway fatalities in

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Admittedly, the 5 mph speed limit is an extreme example, a reductio ad absurdum. Nonetheless, it illustrates the principle that our actions shouldn't be guided by benefits only; we should also ask about costs.

Again, when politicians come to us pretending they're Santa Clauses or tooth faeries delivering benefits only, we should ask what's the cost, whose going to pay and why.

Most people would agree that a 5 mph speed limit is stupid, impractical and insane. That's one way of putting it, but what they really mean is "The benefit of saving 43,220 highway deaths and the \$230 billion that would result from mandating a 5 mph speed limit isn't worth all the inconvenience, delays and misery."

2003, with an estimated cost of \$230 billion. A 5 mph speed limit would have spared our nation this loss of life and billions of dollars. You say, "Williams, that's preposterous." You're right.

Most people would agree that a 5 mph speed limit is stupid, impractical and insane. That's one way of putting it, but what they really mean is "The benefit of saving 43,220 highway deaths and the \$230 billion that would result from mandating a 5 mph speed limit isn't worth all the inconvenience, delays and misery."

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Sunday, August 15, 2004 H-3

TONY'S NEWEST SUPPORTER IS . . .

Anti-ANWR

TONY KNOWLES, THE Democrat wannabee for the U.S. Senate, keeps digging holes for himself.

With a lot of flag-waving about military veterans rushing to his side, Knowles is bringing to Alaska another failed candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination, retired Gen. Wesley Clark.

Gen. Clark, you'll remember, was the one who had his term as Supreme Allied Commander Europe and as NATO commander-in-chief cut short when the Pentagon decided that Gen. Joseph Ralston, who also has since retired and is now an Anchorage resident, would do a better job and sent him to Brussels to fill those posts.

Clark came home and decided he could better serve as president. But he flamed out during the primary season, one of the first of the Democratic hopefuls to fail.

During the time he was seeking the Democratic presidential nomination, however, Clark rushed to take a firm position on oil and gas exploration and development in Alaska's Arctic.

He's against it. Flat out. His "draftwesleyclark.com" Web site said Clark "opposes drilling in the Arctic Wilderness." He elaborated in an interview on the Diane Rehm Show, a talk show aired on WAMU-FM radio in Washington, D.C. He singled out the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, saying "the gains in terms of U.S. energy independence are relatively marginal."

THIS IS A guy Tony Knowles brings to Alaska to stand up for his senatorial campaign?

What's the matter with Tony, anyway?

He knows Alaskans favor the opening of ANWR. He keeps saying over and over again that he does, too. In fact, he admits, his position for ANWR is directly opposite that of Sen. John Kerry, his party's presidential nominee. Kerry, of course, is in lockstep with the position of the Democrats in the U.S. Senate. They don't want ANWR, either — and they make it pretty clear they don't care what Tony Knowles thinks.

Yet in the middle of the campaign, facing incumbent Sen. Lisa Murkowski, who is four-square behind ANWR along with most of the Republicans in Congress, Knowles brings Wesley Clark to Alaska and wraps his arms around this fellow who opposes ANWR.

Maybe Tony thinks Clark's military background will resonate more with Alaskans than will his environmental foolishness.

The problem is that most military people hereabouts are no fans of Gen. Clark — but are avid advocates of opening the coastal plain of ANWR. Sorry about that, Tony.

Glorious music in our old hometown

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

IT'S NOT A BAD thing to do this business of hosting the old hometown. It's an easy thing to do, too — especially when the subject is music, played by the Anchorage Symphony Orchestra. The new season opens in two weeks with the 38th annual Champagne Pops Concert, this time promising a spectacular evening featuring a rousing selection of George Gershwin favorites. Broadway stars Sam Yaman and Jan Harvath are on tap to light up the Alwood Concert Hall with such songs as "Embraceable You," "The Man I Love," and "Our Love is Here to Stay." Under the baton of guest conductor Robert Moody of the Phoenix Symphony, the orchestra will play the Gershwin classic, "An American in Paris," as well as selections from Turley and Beas. As usual, the Aug. 28 affair will be a black-tie fundraiser sponsored by the Anchorage Symphony League. The event every year produces almost 10 percent of the orchestra's \$1 million budget.



Tobin

MEANWHILE, THE symphony's classic season will be a stunning one, and you don't have to be an ephebe to get excited about what lies ahead. It begins Oct. 15 with a concert featuring one of the world's most acclaimed artists, violinist Midori, a one-time child prodigy who has risen to international heights. Midori, who uses just one name, will perform Shostakovich's Violin Concerto, a top item in the violin repertoire. Among other highlights of the season, the orchestra will join with Anchorage Opera in a fully staged production of Wagner's "The Flying Dutchman," scheduled for four performances in late January. The dates are the 21st, 23rd, 24th, and the 29th. Get your tickets now.

ELSEWHERE IN ALASKA: Soldiers of Fort Wainwright near Fairbanks are honing their fighting skills in a mock village constructed on the post.



"C'mon, Devil! I saw him first."

and named in honor of P-4 Joe Martinez, the only Medal of Honor winner in all the bloody Aleutian battles in World War II. The village includes such everyday structures as a post office, a city hall, a cafe, and a service station — along with a host of electronically controlled targets popping up in doorways and windows. Even the noises of battle — and such realistic armors as an apple pie baking in the oven — are revealed as part of the training facility when troops practice their house-to-house combat techniques. Martinez was the first Hispanic and the first drafted enlisted man to receive the nation's highest honor in World War II. An outstanding rifleman assigned to Co. K, 32nd Infantry, 7th Infantry Division, Martinez bravely defended Japanese machine gun positions on Adak on May 26, 1943. He is buried in his home town of Ault, Colo.

CATCHING UP: Most folks have never heard of the Alaska Pipeline Builders Association, but it's a going concern — even though it meets only every other year, and then only for a cocktail party, a business meeting the next morning, followed by a luncheon and then a concluding dinner. This year's affair, with considerable conversation about the prospect of a natural gas pipeline in our future, was held a couple of weeks ago at the Fairbanks Club of Anchorage. Jack Lantieri, ASRC Executive

Services' executive VP for strategic development and external affairs, was re-elected to another two-year term as the association's president.

WELCOME TO ALASKA: Vladimir I. Volotov, the Russian consul general in Seattle, made his first visit to the 49th State last month. During diplomatic things, he paid a call on Mayor Mark Begich and greeted Alaskans at a reception sponsored by the World Trade Center. He and his wife also took time to see a bit of Alaska, touring Prince William Sound on the 26 Glacier Cruise. Their host was Steve Samuoff, the honorary Russian consul general for Alaska for the last decade. Volotov's previous diplomatic postings in the U.S. were in San Francisco and New York City. His current territory covers nine western and upper Midwest states.

AND WELCOME BACK: Father William T. Burke, a Jesuit priest who spent many years as head of pastoral care at Providence Alaska Medical Center, was a visitor here in late July during a week in Alaska. He met with old friends at a reception at the home of Nancy and John Edwards. Father Burke left here two years ago for Missoula, Mont., where he serves as a chaplain at St. Patrick Hospital and Health Sciences Center, and as an associate pastor at St. Francis Xavier Church. In his leisure time he writes poetry, has his own blog, and trout fishes in the rivers around Missoula.

BIG BIZ: The Port of Tacoma lists Alaska as its No. 3 trading partner — behind Japan and China and ahead of Korea and Taiwan. Tacoma Ocean Trader Express (TORE) and Hamson Lines, the port's two Alaska carriers, account for more than \$3.4 billion annually in two-way trade. But don't ask the politicians in Tacoma to help Alaska when it comes to rounding up support for the opening of ANWR. Like those in Seattle, who likewise don't help a hunk, Alaska business to them often is a one-way street — or ocean shipping lane, as the case may be.

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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OVERTURNING 'ROADLESS RULE' IS ...

Logical step

SURPRISE! GREENPEACE is at it again, stamping its feet in the Tongass National Forest, to protest, the Bush administration's proposal to give the nation's governor the latitude to decide whether to seek added protection for roadless national forest land in their states.

To be sure, the new proposed policy that so riles Greenpeace and its anti-development pals is a breath of fresh air. It replaces the unlawful and wrong-headed "roadless rule" acquired up in the waning days of the Clinton administration as a payoff to its green allies.

The Clinton rule effectively blocked logging, road building and other activities on 58.5 million acres of the nation's 191 million acres of national forests and required the acreage be managed as protected wilderness, a designation that by law requires congressional action.

The Bush administration in January exempted the Tongass from the roadless rule and the U.S. Forest Service started approving small timber operations in the 17 million-acre forest. But under terms of the 1997 Tongass Land Management Plan, about 96 percent of the forest remains off-limits to logging.

You would think that having so much of the forest protected from logging would make Greenpeace happy. But this is not really about reasonable approaches to management of a multibillion dollar forest. Greenpeace does not want any of that. This is about the abolition of logging in the Tongass and elsewhere, no matter the economic effect.

So far, through protests and lawsuits and countless delays, the greens have cost Alaska nearly 2,000 jobs in the timber industry while sending the Southeast economy reeling.

Exempting the Tongass from Clinton's roadless rule may be a start in revitalizing the economy in that part of the state, and allowing states to determine the level of protection for remote areas is a good and logical step in returning the national forests to their multibillion dollar mission.

Greenpeace may not agree, but, like zealots everywhere, it has proven it cannot see the forest for the trees.

Hiding in masks

OVER AND OVER during recent days we have seen the Iraqi Shiite militiamen waving weapons over their heads and proclaiming death to Americans.

Brave fighters for their country? Hardly.

Brave soldiers don't hide behind hoods that mask their faces.

These Muslims do. Instead of joining the struggle to rebuild their country, they are caught up in vicious assaults on some real heroes who are trying to help Iraq and the Iraqi people.

And those heroes — those American soldiers — aren't ashamed to show their faces.

Tongass Forest in best shape ever

By LEW M. WILLIAMS, JR.

Tongass National Forest, which covers 80 percent of Southeast Alaska, is in the best shape ever, thanks to the timber industry, state control of fish and game, and modern Forest Service practices that are winning awards for its managers. Let's go back 50 years.

After World War II, the military payroll left Southeast towns Juneau, A-J Mine failed to reopen. Seward's burned in Sitka and Juneau. The Wrangell mill was bankrupt. The only government that kept Juneau alive was federal. There were no state or Native lands, no state agencies. Participation in the federal highway and airport aid programs was denied Alaska, but they paid the taxes. The 40-member Legislature met for 60 days every other year.

There was no ferry system. One way out of Southeast was through airports at Juneau or Anchorage. Is-land. Travelers flew in small planes, often delayed by weather, to one of two airports. Or, in Ketchikan, Wrangell, Juneau or Skagway, they could catch a small Canadian Pacific steamer.

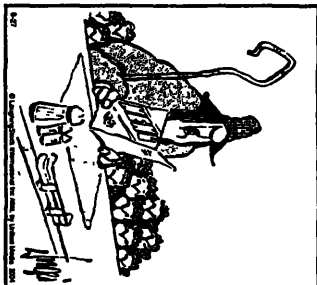


Williams

that operated out of Vancouver every 10 days. Our only summer cruise ship was Canadian National's 200-passenger Prince George.

With mining shut down, there was no year-round industry. Fishing was declining under federal management. The last six years of federal control, the average annual harvest of salmon in Southeast was 12.8 million fish. Canneries burned or closed. There were bonuses on wolves, eagles and seals. Wolves were poached. Hunters and fishermen viewed the three as competition. The deer harvest was two bucks per season. Timber was harvested from beach fringes using A-frances. There were no buffer strips along stream banks. There were few foresters, none at all in Wrangell.

Then, in 1952, loggers began cutting for Ketchikan Pulp Co.'s Ward Cove pulp mill, and six years later for Alaska



"Fish and chips for one, and 28 chief salads."

Pulp Co.'s Sitka mill APC restarted the Wrangell sawmill. KPC operated a log sort yard at Thorne Bay, a new town on Pribilof Island. It operated the Port of Wales Island. It operated the Melchett mill and Ketchikan Spruce Mills.

The two pulp mills brought \$440 million a year back to the United States from exports, 75 percent of it for Alaska wages, services, stumpage and taxes. Our current five-month visitor industry is a long way from matching that.

One of the first actions when Alaska became a state in 1959 was to create the Alaska Ferry System to connect Southeast towns with highway systems at Haines and Prince Rupert. Airports capable of handling jets were built at Ketchikan, Wrangell, Petersburg and Sitka.

The 3,500 year-round jobs in the timber industry boosted a stable economy to the extent towns could afford to pave streets, build schools, hospitals, harbors, housing, swimming pools, three college campuses and hydroelectric generation plants.

State management of fish and game boosted the average annual harvest of salmon in Southeast, all raised in natural forest streams, by five times. Deer bag limits doubled. Bounties and poisoning were dropped. Bear and wolf populations, unknown within towns 50 years ago, increased. Game populations were thriving. Thanks to 3,500 miles of roads built by the timber industry, the Forest Ser-

vice has established 145 recreation cabins, 25 trail shelters, 15 major campgrounds, 600 miles of trails, large visitor centers at Juneau and Ketchikan and small centers in Petersburg and Sitka and overlooks at four bear-watching creeks. About 400 permits have been issued to recreation providers — private businesses — triple the number of 10 years ago. Resorts have proliferated.

Unfortunately, the improved Tongass also attracts environmentalists and journalists from the Lower 48, looking for headlines (like Greenpeace) more than facts. Their work has been published in the Christian Science Monitor, the Washington Post, USA Today and others — with glaring inaccuracies.

Loggers are being slandered, Greenpeace, and like-minded organizations claim Wrangell. They do not receive checks like Lower 48 farmers (Onguess just, harvested \$16 billion for farm subsidies). Roads from harvest of timber subsidize the recreation and visitor industries and communities infrastructure development.

USA Today says the Tongass "is doomed." Wrong. Ninety percent of the 96 million acres of Tongass timber, including 88 percent of the high-volume old growth, remains untouched and will for all time. The small timber industry hopes to provide year-around jobs harvesting about 300,000 acres in the next 100 years. None of the dozens of fish and wildlife species are threatened.

Two-thirds of the Tongass is rock and glacier, the Christian Science Monitor claims. Wrong. It is 42 percent.

One million acres of Tongass timber have been harvested, according to the Kansas City Star. Wrong. It is 400,000.

The Washington Post claims there is large scale logging in the Tongass and logs are being left to rot. Wrong. There has been no large scale logging in the Tongass in 10 years.

The 51 million board feet of timber harvested last year is one-tenth the volume of the 1970s and 80s. The Forest Service is negotiating to have logs removed that were left by one bankrupt small logger.

Lew Williams Jr. is a retired publisher of the Ketchikan Daily News. His e-mail is lmw@voiceofalaska.net.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Senior editor

Cheaters

It's exactly what we said months ago

By PAUL JENKINS

Paul Jenkins is an editor of The Anchor
ago Times.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

MAJORS ANNOUNCE PLANS FOR...

West Sak

TUESDAY'S announcement by ConocoPhillips about plans for developing the West Sak oil field may seem a small thing by Alaska standards.

After all, the project would add only 35,000 barrels of oil per day to North Slope production and bring West Sak's total daily output to a mere 45,000 barrels per day.

Total Alaska production is just under 1 million barrels per day, so another 35,000 barrels is not a bonanza-size addition. But the West Sak news could easily be one of the most important developments in the Alaska oilpatch in many years. West Sak is a problematic field, it sits at a relatively shallow depth of 3,000 to 4,500 feet and the oil is much cooler and sluggish than in the deeper, hotter and more productive fields on the Slope. Its output is called heavy oil.

Geologists project that West Sak and the even shallower Ugnu field contain 23 billion barrels of crude, about what the massive Prudhoe Bay field held before production began there in 1977. ConocoPhillips estimates about 3 billion barrels are recoverable from West Sak. The field's ultimate daily output is expected to be considerably higher than 45,000 barrels, but won't approach Prudhoe's peak production of 1.6 million barrels per day in 1988.

West Sak was discovered in 1971 and the size of its underground accumulation ranked it early on as a major find. But economic challenges, especially its Arctic location, held development back. As one industry expert put it, "If West Sak were in Texas, it would have been developed years ago."

A SPOKESWOMAN for ConocoPhillips said Alaska's Economic Limit Factor, a tax break to encourage development of fields with marginal economics, was a major factor in bringing the project to fruition. She said E.L.F. will not apply when the expansion is completed because the increased flow will make it ineligible for the tax break.

Expansion of West Sak has a projected cost of \$500 million. It will involve expanding an existing drill site and construction of an entirely new one elsewhere in the field. The new one will be West Sak's first stand-alone drill site and will include well-heads, production facilities, pipelines and power lines.

The work at West Sak will generate more than 850 jobs in Alaska during the peak construction phase next year. Detailed engineering contracts for the project have been awarded to VECO Alaska and NANA/Cat Engineering, LLC.

The field is operated by ConocoPhillips Alaska for the owners, ConocoPhillips (52 percent), BP (37 percent), Exxon-Mobil (5 percent), Unocal (5 percent) and Chevron Texaco (0.1 percent).

Increasing West Sak's oil output represents a significant investment by major oil companies that will create jobs for Alaskans and yield new royalty and tax dollars to the state treasury.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Guest editor

White line campaign goes toes up

By TOM BRENNAN

We're not getting much support for our campaign against using white paint on roadway lane lines in snow country. Our complaint was that white paint is all but invisible when it's covered by white snow, which is the normal condition for nearly half the year in Alaska.

When we complained to the Federal Highway Administration, a government official cordially responded with a section of the official manual for painting lane lines.

He said current regulations mandate that traffic control devices be yellow, white, red or blue, which means their functions can't be interchanged without causing confusion. And since orange is used to denote hazards and on safety jackets for highway workers, that's out for road use.

And what do you know, it says right there in black and white that white lines — with a few exceptions — are used to separate traffic flowing in the same direction and to mark the right edge of the roadway. Yellow lines separate traffic flowing in opposite directions.

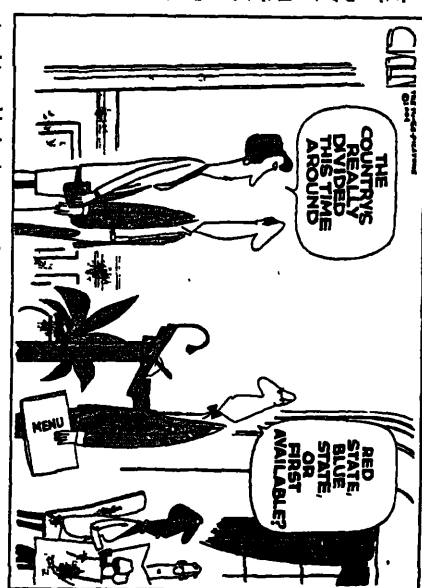
The highway guy didn't come close to addressing whether you are supposed to be able to see the lines outside of tourist season and he didn't know who made the original decision or why. My guess was that it was a nameless bureaucrat who lived in the banana belt, never saw snow and wasn't even sure what color it is.



Brennan

We got some e-mail on the subject, most along the lines of "We don't need no stinkin' lane lines in Alaska." And some made the valid point that studded tires tear up the paint anyway, so there wouldn't be much to see during winter even if the snow didn't cover the lines.

The problem has been bugging me ever since I went to Hawaii in January a few years ago and drove on roads that had white fluorescent paint between the lanes. A sign on one of those roadways



at night was like handing an airplane on a lighted runway; you could see exactly where you were and where you were supposed to go.

The contrast to our winter driving conditions here was dramatic — and I don't mean just because we have slippery streets and numskull drivers. I was nodding down a road at night and declaring to my wife in amazement, "I can see I can see!"

I decided I would come back here and at least complain about the problem and wonder if there isn't some solution. Obviously repainting all the nation's roadways is nothing that could happen anytime soon, but somebody needs to be thinking about a long-term solution.

And one faithful reader said "I was taught to describe a problem and then also to offer a solution to said problem. What is yours?"

My solution would be to phase out white lines — however long that takes — and replace them with another color — and hopefully a technological solution like fluorescent paint and indentations that would keep the lines from getting chewed up by tire studs. Those things already exist and have been tried here, with varying success. The fluorescent

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Tom Brennan is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

ST. MARY'S CHURCH CELEBRATES 50th ...

Anniversary

REACHING THE half-century mark is a notable achievement for any institution, and a *trifling* reason to celebrate. It's an especial milestone in a state still only 45 years old itself. So there is a notable cause to rejoice as St. Mary's Episcopal Church begins the observance of its golden anniversary this weekend.

The celebration will begin Saturday with a party from noon until 3 p.m. — a "Creative Fear and Salmon Bake," as a matter of fact, scheduled in the church's Waldron Hall area and on the parking lot on the church grounds at Lake Otis and Tudor Road.

There will be singers and dancers and musicians, and art and craft works by members of the St. Mary's congregation who will display their wares and talents.

On Sunday, the parish will celebrate the Feast of St. Mary the Virgin, with services in the church followed by refreshments in Waldron Hall. The Right Rev. Mark MacDonald, Episcopal bishop of Alaska, will be the celebrant, and the Rev. Michael Burke, rector of St. Mary's, will preach.

A special guest will be the Rev. Philip Desmond, the first vicar of St. Mary's 50 years ago.

The anniversary observance will extend through Nov. 28, the date of the church's first worship service in 1954.

The city of Anchorage was only 39 years old back then. Church records show that 22 people joined the new vicar at the first service.

The parish now counts 900 families among its members. Congratulations are in order — and best wishes for 50 more years of growth and service to the community.

Mainstream Dems?

A NEW YORK Times/CBS survey of more than a thousand delegates attending the Democratic National Convention in Boston revealed some astonishing views, indicating Sen. John Kerry's party is not quite in step with mainstream America. Examples:

- Nine out of 10 delegates polled oppose the Iraq war.
- Three-fourths of those polled support abortion with no restrictions.
- Ninety-five percent said gay marriages should be legally recognized, and.
- Ninety-six percent opposed tax cuts.

How will such views help Alaska Democratic candidates, including Senate hopeful Tony Knowles? Not much, we suspect. The Democratic platform adopted by the convention made no mention of such subjects, however. Don't ask, don't tell.

With a special economic issue of importance to Alaskans. Silence, please, on Arctic oil exploration. No matter. We're pretty sure where those same delegates stand on that topic. Sorry about that, Tony.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

Wednesday, August 11, 2004 B-7

Journey begins with admitting problem

By ELISE PATKOIAK

The eventual upshot of some columns you'll be reading here over the next few months will be a new picture accompanying the column. Up until now, I have resisted having a new picture taken not because I have aged but because I'd become extremely overweight.

So I've spent the past 10 years or so ducking from cameras. If family or business obligations forced me to be in a picture, I made sure I was standing behind someone, anyone, who could hide my ever-spreading girth.

A little over a year ago I decided that I could no longer hide behind anything but had to admit that I had quite a problem. I imagine I was going through the same process an alcoholic or drug addict goes through the first time they finally acknowledge out loud that they have a problem. It's scary, it's embarrassing, and ultimately very, very freeing.



Having finally admitted the problem, the next step was to come up with a workable solution. I reviewed the diet, history of my life only to find it strewn with every diet, fast, exercise and miracle pill ever marketed anywhere on this earth.

I first tried Weight Watchers when I was still in my teens. I'd been through hypothyroidism for weight loss in my early 20s. In my 30s, a friend and I took to fasting a month at a time, jugging nothing but watered-down juice. I'd tried aerobics, walking, racquetball, biking and praying.

I had about 10 pounds of extra weight per day to show for my efforts. Clearly my methods were failing. When you're young and overweight, you can get away with a lot. Your body can bounce back from just about anything and you think you're invincible. Then, as you age, problems creep up. So slowly that you don't realize just how unhealthy you are until one day you stop and take stock of how



many pills it takes to keep you alive each day. When I realized it took me over five minutes of steady swallowing to get all my daily pills down every morning, it occurred to me that change was needed if I was to achieve my goal of living long enough to spend my last years in substance.

Deciding to have gastric bypass surgery is not something that came easily. Let's face it, gastric bypass surgery alters the most fundamental of drives in the human organism — the drive to McDonald's, Burger King, and Pizza Hut and Taco Bell and, well, you get the picture. Once you've had this surgery, you are committing to changing your life in a way that is hard to imagine.

So I sat on the thought for a long time while trying every other diet I could find that I hadn't already gained weight using. My favorite was the Atkins diet. I'd faithfully stayed on that for weeks at a time. I would not lose a lot but would console myself with the idea that at least I wasn't gaining. And then it would strike. The urge to have carbohydrates would become so overwhelming that it was as though my mind had been captured by alien beings intent on snarfing up any and all things related to bread, pasta, potatoes and rice.

For two weeks I would inhale cardio-

hydrates like a junkie on a binge. When the binge ended, I would sit amidst the debris of my yet-again broken resolve and wonder if there was truly any hope for as hopeless a case as I was.

It turned out there was hope. I had to be dragged rather reluctantly to it but once there I realized it was the only chance I had of living out my allotted life span and thus snarfing all those who wished otherwise for me. A gastric bypass operation would change my entire life and in doing so give me a future that was looking pretty damn right then.

So I took long rides on my bike as I debated the pros and cons of the surgery. I periodically panicked at the decision. I was about to make. On those days, I would cook lots of pasta. But eventually I came to an acceptance of the inevitable, even if my insurance company didn't totally see it the same way.

Next month we'll talk about insurance companies — or as I like to refer to them, corporate cultures of denial — and just how hard it is to prove you're sane enough for this surgery.

Elise Patkoia, an Anchorage free-lance writer and author of *Parallels* Logic, a humorous look back at her 28 years in Barrow, lives in Anchorage and owns Pseudos Corp Ltd, a writing/graphics company.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

THE NEW YORK TIMES ...

Gets one right

THE NEW YORK TIMES finally got one right. A Times reporter interviewed Doug Isaacson of North Pole and wrote about an Alaskan's opinion on wilderness and careful development in wild country.

Isaacson, a Fairbanks mortgage broker and North Pole city councilman, gave reporter Alan Feuer an earful during interviews both on the ground and while flying over the vast empty tundra and untouched mountains north of Fairbanks and 100 miles north of the Arctic Circle.

And amazingly enough, the reporter didn't run to the nearest green zealot and give him or her a chance to counter Isaacson's comments. That is what we would ordinarily expect from the New York newspaper, once considered America's best. It often sends news people here to ponder the state's scenic grandeur and quote environmental extremists who claim that Alaskans want to run it all.

New Yorkers tend to think of Alaska in terms of Central Park. Isaacson told Feuer "They think it's a beautiful place that has to be preserved. It's a fantasy they're trying to preserve. It's in their minds. It's only when you're living in the rat race of a claustrophobic city that you start with all those claustrophobic thoughts."

"But people live here. They have to earn a living. Don't tell me the environment's so fragile we'll destroy it. We're not going to bite the hand that feeds us."

THE ARTICLE was printed Friday in both The New York Times and the Anchorage Daily News. A story by the New York newspaper reporting factually on the opinions of a thoughtful and fairly typical Alaskan is surprising because The New York Times is both left-leaning and green, giving most of its articles on Alaska a distinctive slant in those directions.

That is not just our opinion. A column by the newspaper's own public editor recently asked the question, "Is The New York Times a Liberal Newspaper?" His answer, "Of course it is." The column went into considerable detail on the editor's evaluation, but his conclusion was that The Times has a decided and obvious lean to the left. (The editor didn't address the green question, but we're hoping he will.)

Alan Feuer's unbiased piece on Doug Isaacson and his Alaskan viewpoint was apparently motivated by the reporter's assignment, which was to interview people from the nation's huntlands who are slated to be delegates at the Republican National Convention.

At the reporter's request, Alaska Republican Party Chairman Randy Ruedrich gave Feuer a list of six delegates for possible interviews. Feuer picked Isaacson, called him up and headed for North Pole.

Isaacson told the reporter, among other things, that he will soon be heading for New York and the convention and hopes to spread the word about what Alaska and its people are really like — and what's important to them.

Kerry wasted four days in Boston

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

No house for Kerry. The Democrats and their pollsters will tell you this is because the electorate has already made up its mind. But if that is the case, why are they campaigning? Why have a convention in the first place? In reality, at least 10 percent of the population is undecided, and John Kerry's convention appears to have gotten none of them.

The other explanation is stylistic. Kerry rubbed his speech, sleeping on his airplane and then there was the sweet anaphora and then, not quite Nizkorian lip sweat, but enough to distract.

Hardly. The explanation that respects the intelligence of the American people is that Kerry had nothing to say. Well, one thing. Vietnam. His entire speech, the entire convention, was a celebration of his military service. The salute. The band of brothers. The Swift boat metaphors. The attribution of everything — from religious values to foreign policy wisdom — to Kerry's five-month stint in Vietnam 35 years ago.

The problem is that the association of fitness for the presidency with military experience does not withstand five minutes of reflection. If that were the case, Abraham Lincoln would have failed as commander in chief in the Civil War, and Franklin Roosevelt would have failed in World War II. By that logic, Douglas MacArthur would have been a great president.

And, for that matter, Bob Dole. The most cynical moment of the four days was provided, naturally, by Bill Clinton when he implicitly reproached himself for having set out the Vietnam War, a smug self-congratulatory way of attacking President Bush and Vice President Cheney for shames. After all, in the 1992 campaign he adamantly denied that he changed the draft. And according to what Clinton says now about the centrality of military service, the 1996 election should have been a landslide for him.

The whole claim is, of course, ex post facto dangerousness. For all his fawning mention of John F. Kennedy, Kerry missed the central irony. Who was it



that sent Kerry and the others into the disastrous Vietnam War if not Kennedy (Navy and Marine Corps Medal), Lyndon Johnson (Silver Star) and an entire political establishment that had served in World War II and Korea?

Yes, Vietnam service gives Kerry a credential for high office. But beyond that, what is there? His biography, as presented to the world, was this: He was born, went to Vietnam and is now running for president. Just about his entire adult life is a 30-year void. The biographic film at the convention omitted his first entry into politics. This failed run for Congress in 1972, an attempt to cash in immediately on his Vietnam/veteran service? There was no mention of the fact that his first elected office was as Michael Dukakis's lieutenant governor. And precisely nothing was said about his 20 years of deeply unmemorable service in the Senate.

The convention gave no bounce because it consisted of but two elements: Vietnam, plus attacks on the president. The press followed the claim that the convention, following a directive from on high, was not negative. In fact, that meant simply that Al Gore was not to repeat his charges that the Bush administration is allied with "diplomatic bribery" and running a "jungle." And that Bush was not to be attacked by name.

Negative. The themes were transparently negative. We are not the party that runs leads you into war. We are not the party

that trashes the Constitution. We are not the party that acts unilaterally. And my favorite, because of its Escher-like vagueness, we are not the party that divides the country — as opposed to those living, Constitution-trashing, unilateralist Republican cowboys.

None of this is out of bounds, mind you. It is simply politically stupid. It does not work. Why? Because the political market has, as they say on Wall Street, already discounted these negatives. The people have already registered all the bad news of the past six months that has sent Bush's approval ratings plummeting.

Four days wasted — spent on redundant attacks on a president who has already paid politically for his sins, real and imagined. And the rest of the time spent on an exonerating, selective biography, which, although considered onerously honorable episode, tells us absolutely nothing about how President Kerry would deal with al-Qaida casing buildings in Manhattan and Washington or with the bad guys now converging in Fallujah.

In other words, nothing about the future. What is what elections are about. Hence, no bounce.

Charles Krauthammer writes a weekly, nationally syndicated column for The Washington Post. His column is distributed by the Washington Post Writers Group. © Copyright 2003 The Washington Post Co.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

KNOWLES' LACHLUSTER RECORD TELLS THE ...

Real story

A LL YOU CAN DO is chuckle when politicians start claiming they have much to do with creating, saving or improving jobs in the private sector.

Everyone but Democrats knows that the only way government can create a job is to take money out of your pocket at gunpoint — either directly or indirectly — and give it to somebody else. It can do little more, it has no wealth other than what it can wring from you.

When it comes to jobs, the best government approach is to provide a robust business climate for entrepreneurs through enlightened tax policies and sensible laws and regulations — and then get the heck out of the way.

Tony Knowles, a businessman and former two-term governor, surely must know all that as he works to unseat Republican incumbent U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski. But apparently he has succumbed to the overpowering temptation to juggle the numbers and take credit where little to none is due.

In a recent campaign ad, Knowles audaciously claims something like 30,000 jobs were created during his term as governor — although now, if you can believe it, his campaign is quibbling. Quoted in the Anchorage Daily News, Knowles campaign aide Matt McKenna asked, "Have we ever said that we created 30,000 full-time jobs?"

IT MAKES YOU wonder whether the Knowles effort is a serious political campaign or a skit from "Saturday Night Live." Oh, the campaign also claims Knowles saved jobs in various Alaska industries, including fishing and timber.

While all that sounds good, it is at odds with history. During Knowles' eight years in office, Alaska's economy stumbled and stalled. High-paying jobs were replaced by a growing service economy, complete with lower-paying jobs and fewer benefits.

Commercial fishing took it on the chin and the timber industry was all but wiped out in Southeast Alaska, losing something like 60 percent of its work force. While the mining industry managed to hold its own, kids stampeded out of the state to attend school, get jobs and start their lives elsewhere.

In the only arena where Knowles actually had the power to increase the number of jobs — government — he did so. The state Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Research and Analysis shows that between 1994 and 2002, the number of state government workers increased by at least 2,200.

That doesn't sound like anything to brag about. But politics is politics, and Knowles plays that game very well.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Liberals condescending to blacks

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

During the first Reagan administration, I participated in a number of press conferences on either a book or article I'd written or as a panelist in a discussion of White House public policy. On occasion, when the question-and-answer session began, I'd tell the press, "You can treat me like a white person. Ask hard, penetrating questions."

The remark often brought uncomfortable laughter, but I was dead serious. If there is one general characteristic of white liberals, it's their condescending and demeaning attitude toward blacks. According to a Washington Times story (July 14, 2004), Democratic hopeful Sen. John Kerry, in a speech about education to a predominantly black audience, said that there are more blacks in prison than in college.

"That's unacceptable, but it's not their fault," he said. Do you think Kerry would also say that white runaways are failures? Aside from that, Kerry being factually wrong about the black prison population vs. the black college population, his vision differs little from one that holds that blacks are a race of derelicts, victimized people who cannot control their destiny and whose best hope depends upon the benevolence of white people.



Williams

Have you watched some white politicians talking to black audiences? It's hard enough to watch the Revs Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson do an imitation of Rep. William J. Perry. But to watch Al Gore and Bill Clinton do it is something at the least. They don't talk to white audiences that way.

As a matter of fact, Sharpton and Jackson don't talk to white audiences that way, either — talking about going from the outhouses to the White House; and from disgrace to amazing grace and other such nonsense. By the way, other addressing the NAACP's 95th annual convention in Philadelphia, Kerry gave the audience the black power clenched-fist salute. I



wonder whether the white audiences get the black power salute as well.

On July 23, President Bush gave a speech to the National Urban League. Unlike so many other white politicians speaking before predominantly black audiences, Bush didn't bother to paralyze and supplicate. He spoke of educational accountability and school choice and condemned high taxes, increased regulation and predatory lawsuits. He demanded the institution of marriage. He didn't see blacks as victims in need of a paternalistic government to come to our rescue.

He saw blacks needing what every American needs — an environment where there's rule of law, limited government and equality before the law. The most important question President Bush left with the audience was whether blacks should give the Democratic Party a monopoly over their vote and take their votes for granted.

Sen. Kerry and others have criticized Bush for snubbing the NAACP convention. Here's my question to you. If you were president, would you speak before a group whose president, Karen Malone, said, "We have a president that's prepared to take us back to the days of Jim Crow segregation and dominance," or whose chairman, Julian Bond, said, "President Bush has appeased the

wretched appetites of the extreme right wing and has chosen Cabinet officials whose devotion to the Confederacy is nearly as much as the Confederacy itself?"

It's always been my contention that the conservative vision shows far greater respect for blacks than the liberal you-can't-make-it-without-us vision. For decades, there have been buy-off-the-black-vote presidential appointments like secretaries of labor, health and human services, education and housing.

But it's been conservative presidents who have appointed blacks to top positions of responsibility and authority such as secretary of state, national security adviser, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Republican presidents didn't make these appointments to buy off the black vote. They chose the best people around, who just happened to be black Americans.

Maybe it's guilt that motivates white liberals. That's why I've graciously offered Certificate of Amnesty and Pardon (<http://www.grou.edu/departments/economics/wew/gbl.html>).

Walter E. Williams is a professor at George Mason University at Fairfax, Va. His column is distributed by Creator Syndicate Inc., 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045; (310) 537-7003.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Editor

CHANGE OF COMMAND ...

At Fort Rich

A GOOD MAN IS leaving, and another with a distinguished service record is reporting for duty as the top commander at the headquarters of the U.S. Army Alaska. Heading out for a new assignment, with a new star and a higher rank, is Lt. Gen. John M. Brown III, who is departing Fort Richardson to become commanding general of the U.S. Army Pacific at Fort Shafter, on the island of Oahu in Hawaii.

Coming in as his successor is Brig. Gen. James T. Hirai, now the deputy commander of the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. He will take command of Army forces in Alaska — and at the same time become deputy commander of the Alaskan Command — at change of command ceremonies at Fort Rich at 10 a.m. on Aug. 31.

The post is a two-star job, and the presumption is that Hirai, a 36-year career infantryman who is a native of Hawaii, will step up to the rank of major general — which Brown held before his appointment to his new post.

Gen. Brown, in his two years in command here, has presided over some major changes in the Army structure — including bringing on line the new Stryker Brigade units at Fort Rich and Fort Wainwright, near Fairbanks. A soft-spoken Georgian by birth, Brown put himself among the top ranks of the many outstanding Army leaders who have served here over the years.

GEN. HIRAI, who graduated from the University of Hawaii in 1974, brings with him a record that likewise has been marked by distinction.

He entered the Army right out of college, and among his previous assignments have been assistant division commander for maneuver of the 4th Infantry Division at Fort Hood, Texas, chief of staff for the U.S. Army Pacific at Fort Shafter, Army garrison commander at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, commander, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, 25th Infantry Division (Light), at Schofield Barracks, and commander, Co. C, 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry, 3rd Infantry Division, U.S. Army Europe and Seventh Army in Germany.

Anchorage's civilian community has become accustomed to the comings and goings of the military leaders assigned at Fort Rich and at Elmendorf Air Force Base. But one fact has remained a constant — many of those who have served here formed close friendships with Alaskans.

A big number have returned in their retirement years and now call Anchorage home. We cannot speak to what John Brown and his wife, Elaine, may do when the time comes for him to put away his uniform. But they will leave here knowing they would be warmly welcomed back.

Scaling new heights for Bob Hickel

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

THOSE WHO FOLLOW the late of Trail Shed Dog Race know that Bob Hickel isn't your average winery office executive. He's been on the trail to Nome four times, including one trip when he saved the life of one of his missing buddies, a co-worker and friend, the late Bob Kermes. Now Hickel, the chief operating officer for Hickel Investments, has reached a high on yet one more challenge — Mount McKinley. Climbing with two of his sons, Hickel got to the 14,200-foot level before falling victim to altitude sickness and had to break off his climb. But his sons, Ryan, 27, and Rhett, 22, reached the 20,320-foot summit on July 5, along with a 27-year-old pal from Portland, Ore. Jake Watts. Led by professional mountaineers from the Alaska Mountaineering School in Talkeetna, they were on the mountain just ahead of another team that included Mario Locatelli of Hamden, Mont., who became the oldest person to stand atop Denali.



Locatelli was 71 years, 7 months old when he reached the top of the mountain, beating the old record by a few months. Hickel says last month's ascent marked a milestone for Locatelli.

By scaling McKinley, he had successfully climbed the highest mountains in all 50 states. Makes that mountains and hills, since some states — Illinois, Ohio and a few others here and there across the land — really don't have actual mountains to speak of. Indiana's Brown County hills, for example, don't quite measure up, despite what old Hoosiers in the audience might like to think.

SPEAKING OF REACHING heights, there was a lot of high-altitude dying hereabouts during two weeks of aerial training by the military as part of Operation Cope Thunder — or, to be more precise and use the new name, Cooperative Cope Thunder. It was cooperative because fighter jets from nine foreign countries participated in the multinational air combat exercise that wound up July 30. On hand were fighters from India, Singapore, Germany, the United Kingdom, Mongolia, Canada, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Australia, working with 11th Air Force jet and ground personnel from Elmendorf Air Force Base. Malaysia also was represented with a single transport-type plane, getting familiar with such big operations. Air Force folks say this was the first time the Indian Air Force had deployed fighter aircraft to the United States. About 1,120 service men and women from the other countries were here for the simulated combat exercises.

TALK OF THE TOWN: Anchorage's ding-dong crowd is all abuzz with the return of Giorgio Chinetti as the owner and chef at Villa Nova, a restaurant of epicurean delight during his previous 20 years at the same address, 5121 Arctic Boulevard, near the corner of International Airport Road. Under his expert hand, Villa Nova was acclaimed by many as the No. 1 dining spot in Anchorage. The report is that Giorgio, as he is known, repurchased Villa Nova and took over again as head man Aug. 1, re-burning after a three-year absence during which he launched a new San Francisco restaurant, Paris, as well as reopening someone this month.

ELSEWHERE ON THE restaurant circuit, another of Anchorage's favorite dining attractions, Little Italy at 2300 E. 86th St., will celebrate its 20th anniversary in November — with a big gathering of family and friends being planned by owners Spino and P.J. Galt. This is a warm, friendly and totally fabulous place that features marvelous Greek and Italian appetizers, salads, entrees and desserts — and a classy selection of domestic and imported wines and beers.

ON THE ARTS SCENE: A real treat is in store for lovers of glorious music a week from Thursday as the Anchorage Festival of Music presents its 2004 Young Alaskan Artists Award winner, coloratura soprano Christa Kneese, in a recital scheduled at 7:30 p.m. at the First Congregational Church at 2610 E. Northern Lights Blvd. She will be accompanied by pianist Juliana Oumchuk in a program that will include works by Mozart, Bach, Schumann, Saint-Saëns, Liszt, and Stephen Sondheim. Admission to the Aug. 19 program is by donation, with \$20 suggested for adults and \$10 for students and children. Miss Kneese just received a bachelor of music degree in vocal performance from the University of Oregon and will begin master's degree studies this fall as a teaching fellow at the University of Florida.

ALL AROUND THE CITY: Assistant School Superintendent George Valakis is stepping down as chairman of the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce after two consecutive one-year terms, and will be succeeded in September by Sharr Langford, president of Eagle Enterprises. But Valakis won't be leaving the leadership roster. He's been re-elected to a three-year term on the chamber yet another trophy on Aug. 18 at the Hotel Captain Cook. He'll be first and center at a \$125-a-person banquet sponsored by the Institute of the North and the Northern Forum, receiving the Robert O. Anderson Sustainable Arctic Award. The award is named in honor of the former CEO of Atlantic Richfield, the company that struck it rich for Alaska at Prudhoe Bay.

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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BILL J. ALLEN

Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN

Senior editor

Saturday August 7 2004 B-7

THE PRICE OF GAMBLING IS ...

Going up

IF YOU'RE ONE of those who likes to place a friendly wager now and then, you might want to lay a dollar or two on the outcome of an initiative that will be on the November ballot in Washington state.

Big, big bucks are going into the campaign in favor of and against the initiative that would permit operations of so-called slot machines to add slot machines to their gambling attractions.

More than 200,000 people have endorsed the proposal, known as I-892, and that's more than enough signatures to qualify it for the ballot — although the secretary of state's office is still reviewing the numbers before certifying the initiative.

Those sponsoring the initiative have spent more than \$464,000, mostly to collect signatures, in their campaign to win voter approval for slots in cardrooms.

AS DRAFTED, the proposal calls for taxing proceeds from the new electronic slot machines to reduce state property taxes.

The fight against the initiative is being led by a coalition called the Campaign for Tribal Self Reliance, representing the 18 federally recognized Native tribes that have full-scale gambling casinos in Washington.

The coalition just announced it has collected \$500,000 from the casino operators. That money will be added to \$97,500 already donated by the *Mocklesfoot* tribe, which so far has paid for anti-initiative ads, polling and campaign mailings.

The co-chairman of the Campaign for Tribal Self Reliance, Ron Allen, told the *Seattle Times* that passage of the initiative "would be a huge setback for us."

The Indian groups will attempt to offset the appeal for tax relief, Allen indicated, by posing the question, "Do you want gambling for private interests instead of what is for social and community benefit?"

The argument, in other words, will be made that Native gambling casinos provide a major source of tribal income, while slot machine revenue at privately owned cardrooms largely would wind up in the pockets of the individual owners.

By the time of the Nov 2 election, the *Times* said, the campaign will have become a multimillion-dollar affair.

'Where's the beef?'

Several years ago there was a TV commercial which became extremely popular because of a catchy little phrase that came to my mind after watching John Kerry steal lines from no fewer than nine previous presidents' campaign speeches. That commercial was selling hamburgers. I can't figure out what this speech was supposed to be selling, but the phrase that comes to mind is "Where's the beef?"

I don't believe thinking American people will be persuaded to vote for a candidate who offered little if anything more than the promise of things to come. They've heard that all before.

In the end, Ronald Reagan was right: integrity counts. John Kerry failed to convince me his integrity is above medals over the Capitol fence in a disgusting display of something, and a disregard for all that this country stands for. "Where's the beef?" Tell me.

Vern Higgins

West Palm Beach, Florida

Anchorage: Get moving

Recently The Voice of the Times erroneously commented on Las Vegas' new monorail. While monorails are indeed exciting, a far better opportunity is available for Anchorage. It's called personal rapid transit (PRT).

PRT is a system of three to four person automated personal cars that travel on a network of elevated guideways. Stations are situated throughout the network. The automated cars wait for passengers at each station. Passengers select a destination, buy a ticket, and then enter the vehicle.

Analyses show that PRT far outperforms monorail systems. Various independent studies have shown that a PRT system would attract 30 to 50 percent of all trips in its coverage area.

This problem is that PRT is an emerging system. And so, overly cautious bureaucrats and politicians avoid it. What is needed is a daring community to snap this technology up. We could do it with an earmarked federal appropriation.

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Sen. Robert Byrd did it for a West Virginia university, an obsolete and far inferior system back in the 70s. It's still operating and popular despite its obsolescence. We could do it if we wanted.

Ryan Kennedy
Citizens for Personal Rapid Transit
Alaska Chapter

Gov. Murkowski on track

In response to your "Whatever Happened to Happiness" editorial of Aug. 1 I was surprised, as I have felt for some time, that much of what appears under the Times banner is in the form of whining.

You complain about the liberal this and the leftist that, and on and on I am not of the conservative persuasion, but I make it a point to read your side of things every day. Most of the time, I disagree. But your "Happiness" piece has me giving you credit for noting it.

I did not vote for Frank Murkowski, but I will say that he's now supporting, perhaps even championing, probably the most important project to come down the pike since the trans-Alaska pipeline — the proposed rail line connecting Alaska with the Lower 48, via Yukon Territory and British Columbia.

This project can have tremendous long-term positive effects on our state, creating permanent jobs, establishing and growing villages, and allowing a new

transportation artery. Let's be happy that someone has the foresight to get behind something that has such promise. Voters of all persuasions need to let Murkowski know he's onto something.

Scott Robert
Anchorage

Project preserves legacy

Allow me to thank the Times for your attention to Alaska Moving Image Preservation Association (AMIPA) and our media preservation activities. We are truly blessed to live in a state with such a rich mix of culture and history.

Our project, "Voices and Images of Alaska," seeks to identify media collections across our great state, with major funding coming thanks to matching grants — not from the NEA as noted but from "Save America's Treasures" with the assistance of Sen. Ted Stevens, and from the Rasmussen Foundation. Many other contributors have joined, yet there is still \$130,000 we must raise to complete the match and uncover this precious legacy.

The footage we save today will be the textbooks of tomorrow, and we invite all those who believe in the future of Alaska's past to join us in our efforts.

Bob Curtis-Johnson
General Manager
AMIPA

Disputes acreage issue

In response to Tom Brennan's column of July 29, what does the land area of the counties that Bush won have to do with anything? Acres don't vote, people vote! Al Gore received over half a million more votes nationwide than Bush did. Using an interesting piece of trivia to try and make Bush's election victory seem legit is absurd.

In a democracy the majority is supposed to rule, yet here we have a president who the majority of Americans didn't want in office.

Ty Norrath
Anchorage

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

RELIEF IN SIGHT FOR INTERSECTION ...

Gridlock

MAYOR MARK BEGICH is on the right track in taking the first step in alleviating the chronic traffic snarl at the Lake Otis Parkway and Tudor Road intersection that has bedeviled Anchorage motorists for years.

Begich this week announced the city's purchase for \$650,000 of a former gas station on the southeast corner of the intersection to begin the long-overdue project to get traffic moving.

The mayor says he plans to purchase seven parcels on the crossroads east side, allowing the intersection to be pushed eastward. Plans call for construction of four new turn lanes, along with pedestrian amenities. It should be completed in 2008.

The project is expected to cost in the neighborhood of \$12 million. Begich says the city has about \$1 million left over from past bonds and projects, and is seeking an additional \$2 million from the Legislature, the Heritage Land Bank or state or federal funds, or voter-approved bonds.

"We're very confident we can obtain the money," Begich says.

Yes, there are other major traffic improvements in the wings, but more motorists have wasted more time twiddling their thumbs at Lake Otis and Tudor than any other intersection in town.

Lengthening Biegrow Street to link Tudor with Abbott Loop, extending C Street south from Diamond Boulevard to O'Malley, and extending Dowling Road to the east and west will all help with the city's growing congestion, but it is more to see that the single most vexing traffic problem in the city finally is getting attention.

We wish the mayor well in this endeavor.

Tainted tirade

ANDREW HALCRO in one of his predictable rants on the left about Frank Murkowski and the current Legislature, laments what he sees as a lack of support for the tourism industry.

In a drive-by rant about a new law that imposes a 10 percent car rental tax, Halcro knocked the governor for cutting funds for tourism marketing. The rental car tax, he said, should be dedicated to tourism programs.

Halcro, a Republican-in-name-only former lawmaker, surely knows one Legislature cannot tell another how to spend money. If he has doubts, he could just ask the suckers who thought the tobacco tax would be spent to save "the kids."

The most troubling aspect of Halcro's self-serving tirade in a column he wrote in last Sunday's Anchorage Daily News was that readers did not get the entire picture about his passion for tourism. It turns out he is president and CEO of Avis Rent-a-Car Alaska, although he failed to mention any of that in his off-target broadside. There is no interest, it turns out, like self-interest.

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Feature editor

Friday, August 6, 2004 B-2

Truth about informed consent law

By GREGG RENKES

Much has been made on the Anchorage Daily News editorial page about the governor signing a new law passed by the state Legislature — with bipartisan support and a three-quarters vote — that addresses requirements for informed consent before a pregnancy is terminated.

The editorial writers have written the governor broke a promise and that the new law is a major change in the state abortion policy. They are wrong on both counts.

For example, in the time since the 2002 election the Alaska courts have stopped implementation of the law requiring parental consent for minors seeking an abortion. The new informed consent law was in part a reaction to this development. So there was no promise broken.

Second, the new informed consent law does not change the abortion policy of the state. Specific informed consent requirements for women seeking abortions have been part of the state's abortion policy since the 1970s. For three decades in Alaska, the law has required written informed consent shall be obtained from the patient or from any other person whose consent is required before termination of a pregnancy.

Further, the law has required that "(t)he patient and other persons whose consent is required shall be advised of the medical implications and the possible emotional and physical sequelae (secondary effects) of the procedure. Make no mistake, this has been the long established informed consent abortion policy of the state. The new law takes the requirements that were contained in part of the state statutes.

This was done for three primary reasons: (1) the Legislature wanted to utilize the regulations from administrative changes without its consent by placing the requirements in statute, (2) legislators believed that the current regulations were not being enforced or consistently applied and that statutory requirements could solve these problems, and (3) enforcement of informed consent requirements could not be accomplished



without specific and consistent standards for the information required.

What the new informed consent law does is require the state to maintain a web site for information related to pregnancy and pregnancy alternatives. The new law makes clear that this information must be "objective, unbiased information that is reviewed and approved for medical accuracy by recognized obstetrical and gynecological specialists designated by the State Medical Board."

Second, the new law holds health care providers liable if they fail to make the approved information available and obtain informed consent before an abortion is performed.

Third, the new law requires that information made available by health care professionals must be provided in a private setting that privacy be protected, and that informed consent requirements be waived where pregnancies result from "sexual assault, sexual abuse of a minor, incest, and medical emergencies."

This new law makes the existing state policy requiring informed consent before termination of a pregnancy enforceable and consistent, it does not change the state's abortion policy. Finally, fear of liability for not following the rules is fueling much of the opposition to this new law. I am sure that

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Gregg Renkes is attorney general for the State of Alaska.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Thursday, August 5, 2004 **B-5**
WILLIAM J. TODIN
Senior Editor

HOWARD DEAN IS A...

Loose cannon

THE NATION can be thankful that Howard Dean had his meltdown in Iowa and not — were he somehow elected — in the Oval Office.

Dean's screaming concession speech after the Iowa caucus should be kept in mind while Dean is serving as the John Kerry campaign's designated loose cannon.

Dean's latest irrationality came Sunday when he suggested that the elevated terror alert ordered by Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge was politically motivated.

But the alert level was raised on the basis of information from various sources, including an al Qaeda operative in British custody and a laptop computer discovered in Pakistan one week earlier. The Brits said the information is credible.

The laptop was not taken easily. It was found after a 12-hour gun battle and the arrest of Ahmed Khalid Ghailani, who was wanted in the 1998 bombings of two U.S. embassies in Africa.

Newsday's Washington bureau reported Tuesday that the unnamed operative told his British interrogators that American financial institutions would be attacked 90 days before the presidential election on Nov. 2. Whether the man knew it or not, President George W. Bush is scheduled to address the Republican National Convention in New York on Sept. 2.

DETERMINATION of the likely targets by U.S. intelligence experts was based on evidence of al Qaeda surveillance of buildings in various financial districts. Much of the building "casing" was carried out several years ago, though some updating was done last January.

Al Qaeda may or may not have decided against that particular attack. But no responsible president — no responsible public official — could ignore the tip and fail to take active countermeasures.

Dean's irresponsible comment was made, while stumpumping for Kerry, in an interview with Wolf Blitzer on CNN's Late Edition. Blitzer asked, "What do you make of the decision to increase the threat level here in Washington, D.C., from yellow to orange, from elevated to high?"

Dean's response, was "I am concerned that every time something happens that's not good for President Bush he plays this trump card, which is terrorism. His whole campaign is based on the notion that I can keep you safe, therefore at times of difficulty for America, stick with me." It's just impossible to know how much of this is real and how much of this is politics, and I suspect there's some of both in it."

Much of the American public is skeptical about many things. Ironically, that skepticism makes millions susceptible to arguments that play to the conspiratorial view of the world held by such doubters.

Dean exploited that skepticism and suggested that the White House is playing politics in a way that — if actually true — could destroy the credibility of both the alert system and the president himself.

Social Security failing without reform

By BERNIA YIGIT BRANNON

Social Security's day of reckoning is uncomfortably near. In 15 years it will pay out more in benefits than it collects in taxes, and the money in the purported trust fund has long been spent on other government needs.

Social Security has gaping holes that cannot be fixed with only minor changes. But there is a solution, one that gives Americans more control over their own money, which means more freedom and more choices. And it's a solution that Congress can start implementing now.

Supporters of reform know that waiting for the election before beginning the steps to reform is a luxury they cannot afford. Observers expect President Bush to again make this a central issue in his campaign this fall, allowing him to use the election results as a mandate for reform in 2006.

For him to have any success in passing through Congress any Social Security reform, it is necessary for Congress to at least begin the process of proposing and vetting the various reform proposals currently under discussion.

To that end, Reps. Sam Johnson, R-Texas; Pat Toomey, R-Penn., and Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., introduced in recent days the "Individual Social Security Investment Program Act of 2004," legislation based on a plan developed by the Cato Institute's Project on Social Security Choice.

As with nearly all reform plans under consideration, private accounts play a crucial role. In this bill, individuals would be able to voluntarily invest their half of the payroll tax, amounting to the entire 6.2 percent worker contribution, into individual accounts. The remaining 6.2 percent would be used to pay the transition cost and fund the Social Security disability and survivor benefits.

Workers who choose to remain in the traditional system would have their benefit calculations gradually shift from wages indexing to prices indexing starting by 2012.

U.S./MEXICO BORDER



Workers who choose the individual account option would receive a recognized bond based on the accrued value of their Social Security benefits, i.e., the value of what they have already contributed to the system.

These bonds, redeemable at the normal retirement age, would be fully tradable in financial markets with proceeds being deposited in the worker's account. This mechanism of recognizing past contributions is unique to this proposal.

The investment structure would be a three-tier system. Tier I would be a centralized, pooled collection. Tier II would offer limited investment options with a 60/40 stock/bond default portfolio. For individuals who accumulate \$10,000, Tier III would give a wider range of investment options.

At retirement, individuals can purchase an annuity or take a programmed withdrawal. As long as either of these options provides an income above the minimum level, funds in excess could be taken out in a lump sum. The government would provide a

safety net by guaranteeing a minimum benefit equal to 120 percent of the poverty level.

This bill shows that giving workers ownership of their savings and equipping them with tools to secure their retirement can be done in a fiscally responsible way. Meanwhile, it transforms the pay-as-you-go system into one driven to whatever demographic trends may arise.

Social Security has been one of the most popular government programs of all time, and politicians who attempt to change it in any way must proceed with caution. However, the current system simply cannot survive in its current state for much longer, so must other-wise borders on demagoguery.

The bill proposed by Reps. Johnson, Toomey, and Flake dramatically improves the fiscal imbalance while bringing personal accountability into the Social Security system.

Bernia Yigit Brannon is a Social Security analyst at the Cato Institute.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

Wednesday, August 4, 2004 B-7

FILM GROUP COLLECTING ARCHIVE OF ...

Alaska images

A GROUP of Anchorage film and tape experts is making a laudable and continuing effort to collect moments of Alaska history that have been captured on film, video and audio tape.

The Alaska Moving Image Preservation Association has launched an ambitious effort to capture, catalog and make available to the public the work of filmmakers great and small who have recorded critical pieces of the state's history. Among the items headed for its archives in new quarters at the University of Alaska Anchorage are historic pieces by famed Anchorage pilot and filmmaker Lowell Thomas Jr., Anchorage cinematographer Bill Bacon, whose credits include shooting movies for Walt Disney, and pioneer Alaska broadcaster Anne Hebert.

AMIPA is collecting film and video material from professional filmmakers and cinematographers, educational institutions, government agencies, non-profits, Native groups and even individuals with historic or culturally significant home movies.

The group is rescuing moving image and recorded sound collections that were winding up in cardboard boxes, closets and storage rooms because nobody knew what to do with them. An official of the group reports that it has already collected 16,000 items and catalogued 6,700 of them, a normal backlog for such an endeavor.

The group has received a variety of grants and donations, including \$500,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts, which was secured by Catherine Stevens and her husband, Sen. Ted Stevens. Mrs. Stevens is former general counsel of the endowment.

Because Alaska is such a young state, much of its history occurred during the era of film and tape — and was captured. That makes the "voices and images of Alaska" project an important contribution to Alaska's recorded culture.

Girlie-men

CALIFORNIA Democrats are all in a twitter because Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger called them — or some of them, at least — "girlie-men."

They object to the terminology, saying it unfairly portrays them as — well, we're not exactly sure what. But they don't like it, whatever it means. Others have just said use of the term by the governor is not politically correct.

Goodness, gracious

Schwarzenegger was blasting Democrat legislators he said lacked the backbone to support a trimmed-down state budget. Instead, he said, they were resisting fiscal reform to protect special interests — trial lawyers, teacher union bosses, labor unions, environmentalists and other such politically powerful folks. No girlie-men among them, apparently. The humorless are everywhere.

Comfort level is high with old friends

By ELISE PATKOTAK

I recently had to go out of town for some surgery. I needed a place to stay between the time of surgery and the day I could return to Alaska. I stayed with an old friend, Janus.

On the day of the surgery, I came down with the flu. We didn't know this until I came out of surgery and was quite ill with symptoms that obviously had nothing to do with the procedure. After almost crying when the doctor told me he wanted to keep me in the hospital for an extra day, he finally agreed to discharge me to her house.

So for the next week, I sat on my friend's couch and coughed. At night, I'd go into her spare bedroom and cough some more. Then I'd get up in the morning, shed drove me to my latest follow-up appointment, we'd return to her house and I would fall back on the couch and cough for the rest of the day.

In order to be comfortable in a situation like that, you have to be very dear friends because the use of friendship are obviously being strained to their limits. It sometimes around hour 60 of sitting on the couch coughing.

I remember at some point in the week taking a break from the cough long enough to look at Janus and tell her how lucky I felt to have had a friend like her for so many years.

In fact, I said, the length of our friendship had allowed it to mellow into something so soft and comfortable that I wasn't sure anyone younger than 50 could truly understand the feeling. And I wasn't saying this simply to keep her from suggesting I check into a motel to cough for the rest of the week.

Old friendships are, to my mind, the most rewarding of relationships. You've been together through thick and thin. You've seen each other at your best and worst. You've commiserated over mistakes and relationships and kids. You've shared colds, clothes, recipes and gossip.



Patkotak



Despite the physical distance between Janus and me, the friendship is so true and true that little can cause it to stretch too far, tear or break.

My friend Grace, who will be my last official visitor for this summer, is another such friend. I met Grace when I was 3 and 1/2 years old. My mother tossed me out of my dad's store one day when I was hanging her while she tried to wait on customers and told me to go meet the nice little girl who moved in two doors down. So I walked to Grace's and there she was, outside her dad's store, having apparently been given the same marching orders from her mother.

We've been friends ever since. We went through grade school and high school together. I was in her wedding. I never traveled East without seeing her. She was the person who escorted my mother to Alaska the one and only time.

I tried to explain about old friends to Janus' daughter the day she drove me to the airport. I told her how Grace was the one my mom caught peering my ear with a sewing needle and pin. To this day the holes in my ears are at different levels. Grace and I learned to dance together in her mother's living room while

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Tuesday August 3 2004 B-5

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

FORT RICHARDSON WINS ...

More troops

DON'T STOP WORRYING about the possibility of Fort Richardson becoming a victim of the Base Closure and Realignment Act — because it still could happen. But the prospect looks less likely now than it did some weeks ago. The reason, Fort Rich's troop strength is about to double in size.

There now are about 2,400 soldiers based at Fort Rich. Beginning in October, that number will start climbing until another 2,000 men and women will find their Army homes here in Anchorage.

It's part of a major buildup of Army forces in Alaska. At the same time the numbers are going up at Fort Rich, another 700 soldiers will be added at Fort Wainwright, increasing its total strength to 4,600.

All told, when these moves are completed, the U.S. Army Alaska will have a complement of 9,000 men and women — reflecting not only the geographic importance of Alaska in the nation's global defense system, but also powerfully speaking to the unmatched training areas offered in the 49th State.

Something else is at play here, too. Alaskans have long had a civic love affair with those who serve in the uniform of their country: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard — they are all welcomed, and they are all honored. And let's not kid ourselves into thinking that isn't important when it comes to making high-level command decisions about placement of troops.

AS PART of this upward shift of forces here, a new 3,400-man airborne brigade is being formed — the 4th Brigade, 25th Infantry Division. It's a parachute infantry outfit, which includes a task force just now returning to Fort Rich after a nine-month deployment in Afghanistan. Two additional battalions and smaller combat support units will be a part of the new brigade.

Fort Wainwright's force increase will include 700 members of the 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry who will move from Fort Rich to become part of the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team. When that move is complete, the entire Stryker brigade will be North of the Range and the full airborne units will be here, south of Denali and its adjacent mountains.

The Army says the moves are part of a plan to restructure itself into 43 rapidly deployable brigade-size units, with five more likely to be added within two years in the Army's words.

"The stationing of the two brigades in Alaska, each adjacent to deployment airfields, gives the commander-in-chief of military forces in the Pacific a one-two punch, a power projection capability to both seize an objective with the Airborne Brigade and then hold on to it with the Stryker Brigade."

In the process, the Alaska civilian communities — and especially Anchorage and Fairbanks — will benefit. We welcome the new troops.

Kerry should admit his liberalism

By JOHN SAMPLES

Walter Cronkite has once advised for John Kerry. Be honest. Run for president as a liberal Democrat. Fly the liberal flag proudly and pose as the heir to the legacy of Roosevelt, Truman, and Kennedy. Cronkite's advice is a variant of a common liberal argument. If only we would stand up and fight the right way, we would start winning elections again.

Put Kerry in the camp of the sleepers. In early March, as his grip on the Democratic nomination grew more secure, Kerry began to run from the "liberal" label. National Journal, among others, noted Kerry had one of the most liberal voting records in the Senate — a laughable characterization, according to the senator. Over the next month Kerry's trot toward the center became a sprint.

During the primaries, Kerry had denounced "Benedict Arnold C.E.O.s" for outsourcing jobs. Now he says "the private sector is the engine of economic growth." Government, Kerry claims, should not be a "burden to business" but rather, help it succeed. He has even promised to "reduce the size of government from what it is today." Shades of the era of big government is over.

He cites his vote for welfare reform in 1996 and a proposed "contract with the middle class." His health plan supposedly uses market incentives to help small businesses. Kerry even tried to have his own Saker Southgate moment with the teacher union. In exchange for \$30 billion of across-the-board pay raises, the teachers would agree to speedier dismissals of the incompetent in their ranks.

In other words, the 80 percent of Americans who do not define themselves as liberals should "hear no," says Kerry. "I am not a redistributionist Democrat," but rather, "an entrepreneurial Democrat."

The gentleman cloth protest too much, methinks. His planned spending on education and health care will be funded by tax increases for the most affluent Americans. That's just old-fashioned Democratic resentment combined with redistribution. The teachers' union director, Stephanie Cutler



unions applauded his plans for redistribution to their members and throwing little concern about income-levies being fired because they know that in the end Kerry will throw money at teachers with no strings attached. On entitlements, Kerry is positively unadivvian. He has promised to oppose all efforts to change Social Security to allow individual ownership of real assets. "I will never privatize Social Security," Kerry declared. "Never, never, never."

Kerry can hardly run from his record. Americans for Democratic Action rates congressional voting records on a scale of 0 to 100. The higher the score, the more liberal the member of Congress. According to political scientist William Mayer, Kerry has an average ADA score of 92, a rating similar to the scores of Ted Kennedy, Barbara Boxer, and Patrick Leahy. In fact, among all the senators who served from 1972 to 1996, 90 percent had a more conservative ADA score than Kerry's average. If Kerry is not a liberal, he has recently changed his views.

What Kerry does tell us more than what he says about his liberalism. Kerry's message will be shaped by Bob Shrum, the author of Al Gore's "people vs. the powerful" theme, and long a member of the hard Left. His campaign manager, Mary Beth Cahill, is an ally of Ted Kennedy along with his communications director, Stephanie Cutler.

John Samples is director of the Center for Representative Democracy at the Cato Institute.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

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GOOD LUCK TO ARMSTRONG ON ...

'Two Bits' well

A LASKANS MAY want to keep their fingers crossed and hope Armstrong Alaska Inc. achieves its mission at the Two Bits prospect on the North Slope.

The company will be drilling a well this winter on the west side of the large Kuparuk Field in an attempt to prove that smaller oil fields can be economically developed on the Slope.

It is looking for a field on the order of 15 million to 30 million barrels of recoverable oil, and it hopes ultimately to bring the profitability threshold down to 10 million to 20 million barrels.

Stu Gustafson, vice president of operations for Armstrong, says success at Two Bits could be more promising than tapping a large field. It could infuse new life into Alaska's oil and gas industry by creating new opportunities in many smaller hydrocarbon accumulations.

The company's president, Bill Armstrong, leans the situation here to the Gulf of Mexico in the 1970s. The big fields there were already discovered, production was declining and the industry grants were looking for more promising places to invest their money.

Armstrong says drilling in the Gulf offshore was considered too complicated and too expensive for independent companies. But the smaller companies explored anyway and found they could make money at it. Today, he says, the Gulf is home to both major companies and "dozens and dozens of highly competitive independents."

His company is especially interested in Alaska because of the state's agreement with the North Slope producers to allow access by independent companies to North Slope oil facilities now that production has declined and space is available for processing and transportation of new oil.

Alaska remains a promising oil province and more major fields may yet be found. But in the long run a prosperous industry picture is likely to involve a lot of independents as well as the large companies.

A pay raise

THE DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS bill headed for approval in Congress contains a provision that should prove popular with Alaska's military personnel, a 3.5 percent average pay raise.

The bill, approved by a House-Senate conference committee, also contains funds for the National Missile Defense Program, which have elements in Alaska, as well as for relatively small infrastructure improvements at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Fort Richardson, Fort Wainwright and Eielson Air Force Base.

Of all the bill's provisions, we suspect the pay raise will bring the loudest cheers.

Socialism doles out stolen property

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

What is socialism? We must be honest if we say it's the agenda of left-wingers and Democrats.

According to Marxist doctrine, socialism is a stage of society between capitalism and communism where private ownership and control over property are eliminated.

The essence of socialism is the alienation and ultimate abolition of private property rights. Attacks on private property include, but are not limited to, confiscating the rightful property of one person and giving it to another or to whom it doesn't belong.

When this is done privately, we call it theft. When it's done collectively, we use euphemisms: income transfers or redistribution. It's not just left-wingers and Democrats who call for and admire socialism but right-wingers and Republicans as well.

Republicans and right-wingers support taking the savings of one American and giving them to farmers, banks, airlines and other failing businesses. Democrats and left-wingers support taking the earnings of one American and giving them to poor people, cities and states. Both agree on taking one American's savings to give to another; they simply differ on the recipients. This kind of congressional activity constitutes at least two-thirds of the federal budget.



Williams

Regardless of the purpose, such behavior is immoral. It's a reduced form of slavery. After all, what is the essence of slavery? It's the forcible use of one person to serve the purposes of another person. When Congress, through the tax code, takes the earnings of one person and turns around to give it to another person in the form of prescription drugs, Social Security, food stamps, farm subsidies or further handouts, it is forcibly using one person to serve the purposes of another.

Can a moral case be made for taking the rightful property of one American and giving it to another to whom it does not belong? I think not. That's why socialism is evil. It uses evil



The moral question stands out in starker relief when we acknowledge that those spending programs coming out of Congress do not represent lawmakers reaching into their own pockets and sending out the money. Moreover, there's no tooth fairy or Santa Claus giving them the money.

The fact that government has no resources of its very own forces us to acknowledge that the only way government can give one American a dollar is to first — through intimidation, threats and coercion — take that dollar from some other American.

Some might reply that all of this is a result of a democratic process and it's legal. Legality alone is no guide for a moral people. There are many things in this world that have been, or are, illegal but clearly immoral. Slavery was legal but clearly immoral. Slavery was legal. Did that make it moral? South Africa's apartheid, Nazi persecution of Jews, and Stalinist and Maoist purges were all legal, but did that make them moral?

Can a moral case be made for taking the rightful property of one American and giving it to another to whom it does not belong? I think not. That's why socialism is evil. It uses evil

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Editor

A PLACE OF HONOR AND A PLACE FOR...

Civic pride

MARK ON YOUR calendars, please, an appointment you should keep on Thursday morning, Aug. 12. If at all possible, plan on taking a half-hour from work. If you're not working that day, put the household chores or your other activities aside for a brief part of the day.

The reason? To attend a ceremony, scheduled that day at 10:15 a.m., to commemorate and rededicate the 11th Air Force/American Home from Siberia memorial on the south side of Merrill Field, just off 15th Avenue and Lake Otis Drive. We've spoken about this several times in the past on this page to help call attention to the monument and to those to whom it pays tribute — World War II airmen who served in Anchorage and in the Aleutians, defending Alaska and carrying this nation's battle to a distant enemy. Many served. Many became prisoners of war. Many died. The new monument contains the names of more than 1,000 of those Army Air Force, Navy and Canadian servicemen who were killed in action, who are still listed as missing in action, or who were unlearned during the conflict.

Anchorage does not have enough monuments to its heroes. It needs more. And this one helps fill an important gap by calling the attention of today's residents and visitors to one piece of Alaska's history that has been too long overlooked.

The 11th Air Force, which serves today as a vital component of the major commands at Elmendorf Air Force Base, was an early entrant in World War II. Merrill Field is where the first planes of the 11th Air Force landed, before Elmendorf was built.

THE MONUMENT was first erected two years ago in what was a modest start to the finished product. Hundreds of hours of volunteer work — by members of the local Edward J. Monaghan Chapter of the Air Force Association and by active duty airmen from Elmendorf — have enhanced the original site and elevated it to be a place of civic pride.

The monument is a link to Alaska's past. It is a reminder that Alaskans of today owe a debt of gratitude to hundreds of others who sacrificed their lives for the freedom that blesses those who live in today's 49th State.

To help pay for site preparation and the construction costs, thousands of dollars have been contributed by individuals and a number of private companies and organizations, including the Rasmussen and Atwood Foundations. Hundreds of hours of in-kind labor and materials have been contributed by contractors and suppliers.

The rededication ceremony will be followed by a \$16-a-person luncheon at noon at the downtown Holiday Inn. Pat Condon, national president of the Air Force Association, will be the speaker. The public is invited. Reservations can be made by calling Gary Hoff at 552-8132.

Whatever happened to happiness?

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

WHY IS EVERYTHING in Alaska so darn negative these days? Part of the fun of living here always has been the joy that came with planning to build the state, and there was fun gloire when people actually got up, took action, and made things happen. Not now. About the only thing that makes headlines around here is bad news. Beat up on people? You bet. Theft, it seems, is what all too many Alaskans now do best.

MAYBE WHAT has evolved here is a mean spirit that is much in evidence in today's political fights. Alaskans used to elect candidates, back in territorial days and most of the century decades of the statehood era, without spouting venom and hate. Sure there were differences between those who were running for office. But dirty tricks, dirty names, dirty tactics were not part of the game.



NOW IT SEEMS Alaskans despise each other. The attitude is reflected in Anchorage every day, in the local newspaper and in television's ugly newscasts. We seem not to be proud of anybody any more.

FRANK MURKOWSKI, a good and decent man, is ridiculed relentlessly and mercilessly in editorial, in editorial cartoons, in news reports. Hardly ever do any of his actions as governor receive even a mild tip of the hat. In recent weeks, this assignment to spread ugliness and innuendo even has been extended to assault the record and accomplishments of Ted Stevens, who has done more for this state than anyone as he continues his 36-year-long walk in the footsteps of one of Alaska's most revered senators, the late E.L. "Bob" Bartel.

THE LEGISLATURE, in its much-too-long sessions in Juneau, has become a mirror of Congress — marked more by acrimony and distasteful dirty-



"The guy wants to borrow our ladder."

anyone than it is a forum to do good for the state. In the old days, legislators actually liked each other. Members of both parties got along. Oh, they scribbled over issues — but they enjoyed what they did and they found it not too hard to work together, get the job done, and go home happy at the end of each session. Now? Don't think so.

EVERYTHING HAS become a reason to fight. No idea is immune from assault, in the most bitter of terms. Take, for example, the proposal of a few weeks ago that the state acquire a new airplane — one powered by a jet engine, rather than a turbine-powered propeller. From the public and media reaction, you would think it was a scheme to build a space shuttle for the private use of the governor. Good grief, air travel has been through three or four generations of jet airplanes. Isn't it about time that the biggest state in the union, where officials have sound reasons to make fast trips to distant places, moves into the modern aircraft age? What's the big deal?

AND THE IDEA of a jet plane, for use by the governor, state troopers, forest fire fighters, and fish and wildlife enforcement officers among others, is nothing new. Doesn't anybody around here remember that such a plan has long been on the table — awaiting, perhaps, the opening of time? You don't think so?

LET'S PROVIDE this reminder, from a Saturday Sunday column in The Anchorage Times on June 15, 1968: "A

jet airplane in the future? Well, Gov. Weller J. Hickel hasn't asked for one yet, but you can bet he's dreaming — on the basis of what happened last week-end. The governor, bound for Sitka to address a joint meeting of the Alaska Publishers Association, the Alaska Associated Press and the Alaska Broadcasters Association, flew from Juneau Saturday in an Air National Guard C-54 which is not cleared for an instrument landing at Sitka. Because of the weather, the plane had to make the trip in heavy weather, flying all the way at 5,000 feet, on a rocky journey which took an hour and a half. His return trip Sunday was aboard Gen. Raymond J. Brewer's twin-engine Sabre. Lamer jet. It covered the distance in 10 minutes."

GOV. HICKEL — AND a state that was then not flush with a \$28 billion bank account and without the aid of millions in federal anti-terrorism dollars — didn't get a jet, of course. But the very thought of such a thing back then — when it truly was not financially feasible — didn't send everybody into a conniption fit. Now, when it makes great good sense, huge numbers of Alaskans go into screaming rages, complete with personal attacks on the governor. Has evilly been let on this generation of Alaskans?

DESPITE WHAT WE always seem to read and hear, the governor is doing a lot of good things — and you don't have to be a dyed-in-the-wool Republican hard-liner to at least give the man a little bit of credit. A couple of weeks ago, Murkowski was in Victoria, B.C., addressing the 14th annual meeting of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region. Among other things, he spoke with some passion about the prospect of extending the Alaska Railroad to the Yukon Territory, and joining there with an extension of the Canadian rail system. It's not a new idea, but it's the kind of big project on which Alaskans deserve to have been built.

WE NEED MORE of those dreams, and most of all, we need to praise — not vilify — those who dream them.

William J. Tobin is an editor of The Anchorage Times.

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Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Saturday, July 31, 2004 **B-5**

KNOWLES REMINDS ON...

Ads pledge

O H, LET'S SEE wasn't it just a couple of months ago that Tony Knowles called a press conference, attended by the usual gaggle of local television camera crews, and vigorously pledged he would never — absolutely never — use Outside, third-party advertising in his campaign for the U.S. Senate?

This was an evil practice, he said, being engaged in by his opponent, Republican incumbent Lisa Murkowski, and by golly it was a terrible thing to do. Alaskans need to run their own campaigns, he said.

The response from Sen. Murkowski's campaign was that it did not control the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee that bought the TV time for the spots that Mr. Knowles found objectionable.

Don't give us that excuse, the Knowles' people said to Lisa's troops. You can stop such underhanded tactics if you really want to — and we'll show you how, because we'll never let any of those kinds of ads appear on TV in Tony's behalf. Yeah, sure.

SO HERE IT COMES, the Outside Democratic ads bashing Lisa and praising Tony.

And what does Tony have to say about this? Don't know. He didn't call a press conference to tell us. Maybe he didn't see the spots on TV. Maybe well, who knows what.

But one of his campaign managers saw them, and he said, by golly, since Lisa didn't stop the Outside GOP ads, Tony isn't going to halt similar Democratic ads. Said a spokesman for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee back East, "We're not going to sit idly by and watch her Washington, D.C., special interests distort his record and not do our own ad to set the record straight."

Sure. And so much for Tony's press conference statements of a couple of months ago, even though they made a lot of great evening TV news fodder at the time, and drew some big headlines in the paper.

But that was then and this is now, and does anybody really care?

Tony has his own special interest groups pumping money into his campaign, and everybody knows it.

This latest dodge from the Democratic campaign string-pullers is just more hollow-than-thou palaver.

Stay tuned until the next made-for-TV press conference. Tony will be there, to pledge something else sure.

The little guy

WE WILL, concede one point about John Kerry. He understands the plight of the little guy better than any other millionaire on the planet who happens to be married to a billionaire.

Kerry wrong on top security issues

By THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

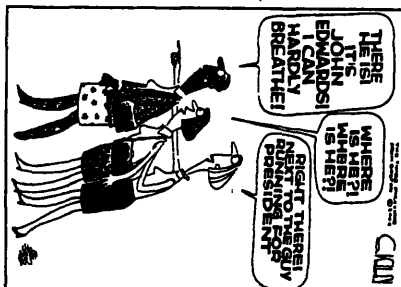
In his physical bearing, John Kerry is notably presidential, all angles and definition. It is his political profile that blurs, with softening voices and elusive convictions. The Democratic nominee's challenge in his acceptance speech (was) to define his political character and to demonstrate that he can be trusted as commander in chief in a post-9/11 world.

The Kerry campaign clearly understands this problem, because it has made "strength" and "security" the theme of its convention week. The word "strong" has been repeated so many times that it reminds us of the old joke about the politician who kept calling himself "the issues candidate" so no one would notice that he had no issues.

In pitching Mr. Kerry to be commander in chief, his campaign is also stressing the personal. Just as he explained that swift boat in Vietnam, he can lead the country now in dangerous times against our enemies because he was willing to fight (and kill) in the Mekong Delta. But because he also knows first-hand the horror of war, he will not be as "reckless" as President Bush. "Strength" and "wisdom," as Bill Clinton put it on Monday — an alluring argument.

Yet surely we all know that personal bravery is not the same as political leadership. The doubts about Mr. Kerry concern not his courage but his judgment and conviction, and have been formed as the result of public services that is far longer than his admirable four months in Vietnam. Those doubts are both political and philosophical.

On the latter, Mr. Kerry has simply been wrong about the major national security questions of his time. Leaving aside the special case of Vietnam, the senator voted against nearly every major weapons system during the Cold War. He supported the reckless name "nuclear freeze" in 1984. He opposed SALT, which convinced the Soviets they couldn't win an arms race. He even opposed the invasion of Grenada at the time, though he now says that is the kind of operation he would support in



other words, he was a stalwart of the dovish wing of the Democratic Party that voters refused to entrust with the presidency from Vietnam until the Berlin Wall fell.

More recently, Senator Kerry voted against the first Gulf War, arguing that diplomacy was enough to remove Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. This vote strikes us as especially noteworthy now that Kerry supporters are trying to portray him as a foreign policy "realist" in the mold of George H. W. Bush, and in contrast to the current president. Yet when the senior Bush sought to use military force in the U.S. national interest, Mr. Kerry opposed that too.

Post-9/11 this is all a political liability, and Mr. Kerry now points to Kosovo, Bosnia and Haiti as examples of military actions he supported. But in public terms they were easier cases. The Democratic Party was solidly in favor, as were many conservatives, including us. The question today is whether and how Mr. Kerry would respond when the intelligence might not be certain, the costs might be high and the UN isn't unanimous.

Mr. Kerry says that unlike Mr. Bush he'll bring the allies along in support of the US action, and it's tempting to believe

that a new president could somehow rally the French and Germans back to our side. But this ignores our diverging strategic interests. The French want the UN to become a brake on the U.S. "boogymen," and much of Europe would rather appease terror than fight it. This won't change merely because Americans elect a new president, and it would be nice to hear Mr. Kerry say he understands this.

Then there is his ever-shifting views on Iraq. He voted for the war when that seemed safer politically in October 2002. But then when Howard Dean was on the march in this year's Democratic primaries, the senator turned into a vociferous war critic and voted against the \$87 billion to fund the job in Iraq. Mr. Kerry has an elaborate justification for this vote, but we agree with Senator Joe Biden, a Kerry supporter who described that vote recently to the New Yorker as "backed" and an attempt "to prove to Dean's guys I'm not a warmonger."

Now that he's won the nomination, Mr. Kerry has once again turned decidedly hawkish. He assails the present management of the war but proposes more or less the same policy. We give him credit for saying he won't withdraw abruptly from Iraq and leave a failed state, but he also leads a center-left coalition that will pressure him to do precisely that as costs rise and compete with domestic priorities. All in all, it is hard to resist the conclusion that if John Kerry had been president the last four years, Saddam would still be running Iraq.

We have little doubt that a Kerry administration would pursue Osama bin Laden to the ends of the earth. The doubts run to what he would do in the hard cases when presidential fatigues and leadership are required. Whatever else they think of Mr. Bush, Americans know he is willing to act in our national defense. They'll be trying to judge over the next three months if they can depend on John Kerry to do the same.

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Friday, July 30, 2004 B-7
WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Staff Editor

KNOWLES SHUNS BOSTON, MISSES . . .

Opportunity

IT IS ENTIRELY understandable that U.S. Senator hopeful Tony Knowles would balk at attending the Democratic National Convention in Boston. Who can blame him for trying to distance himself from the political party that has worked so hard to scuttle Alaska's future?

That aside, he should have gone. In our view, he missed a golden opportunity to show his stuff and further Alaska's interests at the same time.

During the campaign, Knowles repeatedly promised Alaskans he is the guy who can change Democrats' hearts and minds on issues of importance to Alaska, despite his party's miserable record on such matters in the past — opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge's coastal plan to oil exploration, for instance.

The convention, with oodles of Democratic bigwigs in attendance, was a perfect chance for Knowles to walk the walk and change some minds about our state, but, instead, the Knowles handlers say their candidate chose to remain in Alaska.

Maybe Knowles' handlers figured out what everybody else already knew — he would have been wasting his time in Boston.

Liberal guilt

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL made a good point in its response to Bill Clinton's claim that he feels bad because he is now a millionaire and benefiting from the Bush tax cut.

"Give it back," The Journal said in an editorial suggesting that the Clintons could, if they chose, pay their taxes at the 39.6 percent top marginal rate for income taxes that was in effect when Bill was president. The top rate is now 35 percent.

"An alternative would be for the Clintons to calculate their tax liability at both rates and send the difference to charity," the editorial said. "Their generosity would be applauded. And it would be a lot fairer than raising taxes on millions of other hard-working Americans so that rich and famous liberals don't feel guilty."

All for student sports

Your July 26 editorial about student athletes is so far off the mark that it makes a conservative and a supporter of the Times like myself question why I would read your articles.

The Division I UAA hockey team has averaged about a 3.0 grade point average for years. Peter Bullock, who is a local basketball player that led UAA over several seasons and graduated in four years, had over 3.0 GPA. Tobias Schwoerer graduated from UAA with close to a 4.0 GPA. He won several NCAA Division I titles in slalom.

Student athletes often spend close to four hours per day to meet the demands of their sport so it often takes the years to graduate. Do you think that Carlos Booser was not a student at Duke? It is intercollegiate athletics.

Chuck Herman
Wasilla

What's the solution?

Great, July 17 editorial about white lane markers. One of the things I was taught, however, was to describe a problem and then also to offer a solution to said problem. What is yours?

Nils Hynd
Eagle River

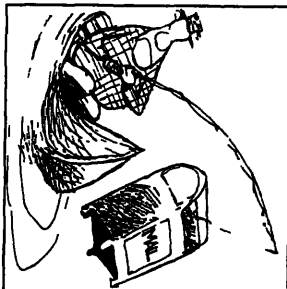
And what color anyway?

I am sorry to see that you have so much trouble with white traffic lane markers and I am sorry to see that you did not give us an alternative color. In my 46 years of driving in Alaska and elsewhere, I have had zero problems with white lane markers; they make sense.

I do not know who first put white lines down the middle of black asphalt to mark the center of a highway, but that was very logical. When yellow replaced white to separate opposing traffic and white lines were added along the right edges of highways, I thought that was extremely helpful, especially at night when white on black poses the best contrast.

In the spring, white lines show up best under a partial coating of winter sand but the big problem for most of us, on heavily traveled streets, is that our studded tires have worn the lane mark.

Letters to The Times



ings off by late winter. When while recessed lane marking reflectors were used in Anchorage, I was all for that but that idea just did not work out. It has not been any experience that yellow center lines show up better under snow than white lines show up under snow.

John T. Jensen
Anchorage

Your choice of propaganda

Regarding July 22 column "Disgraceful fiction of painful events," it is obvious that the Times editors and Mr. Niewodowski must have slept through American History dealing with World War II and Franklin Roosevelt.

One of the Republican claims in the 1940 election was that Roosevelt was preparing to enter the war in Europe in order to aid Britain. Roosevelt blundered by claiming we would only enter the war if attacked.

After the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, many people, largely Republicans, claimed Roosevelt conspired with Winston Churchill to get the U.S. into the war. The attack on Pearl Harbor occurred because Roosevelt ignored all the warnings, and some even went so far as

to claim treason on the part of some Whover, as Tom Brinkley wrote, "The Greatest Generation" answered the call without hesitation despite the claims of many that the war was a Roosevelt conspiracy.

William J. Phillips
Seldovia

Over there or over here

The people responsible for 9/11 must be killed or defeated thoroughly, completely, and unconditionally. We are not engaged in a mere philosophical contest of ideas in the arena of geopolitical thought. This is war.

It is naive to think that they are currently willing to peacefully co-exist. It is foolishness to think that there is any compromise acceptable to us, which would satisfy them. These people do not like us, respect our rights or wish us well. They have no respect for our borders or any hesitancy in killing us, if they can. You cannot see how they treat their own and rationally think they would treat us any better, if they defeat us.

There is no one else willing or able to fight our fight. We cannot relinquish the fight to the moderates among our foe. They know well to be silent or risk being forever silenced.

There is no retreat from this fight to safety within our own borders. If we are to remain a free people, there is no suing for peace or asking for quarter. Any lack of resolve or show of weakness only emboldens more terrorists. Those who are openly at odds with our leaders for political gain give hope to our enemies, prolonging the war, and betray the soldiers fighting and dying to preserve our freedom.

The war is not over, nor is the end in sight. Till it is, we must persevere. Every life lost is one too many, but if we are to remain a free people, we have only one choice: over there or over here.

Jess T. Ellis, DDS
Anchorage

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

Thursday, July 29, 2004 **B-7**
WILLIAM J. TOBIN
 Senior Editor

GREENPEACE VIOLATES...

Ship laws

GREENPEACE has a red face over its failure to comply with Alaska's environmental laws.

Last week, the state Department of Environmental Conservation cited the Greenpeace ship Arctic Sunrise for not submitting oil spill prevention documents before entering state waters.

The Department of Law filed charges against the Greenpeace organization, the ship's captain and its agent. The charges carry a maximum sentence of a year in prison, a \$10,000 fine for an individual and \$200,000 for an organization.

The Greenpeace ship has 27 people aboard, mostly activists protesting proposals to allow limited new logging in the Tongass National Forest. Also aboard was a BBC-TV reporter who came to Alaska from Britain for the festivities.

A Greenpeace spokeswoman haughtily dismissed the failure to comply with environmental laws as "a clerical error about paperwork and not about environmental protection. We're Greenpeace. Of course we want to work within all environmental laws."

We wonder what the group's attitude toward a "clerical error" would be if the mistake were made by an oil tanker or a logging ship. Quite different, you can be sure.

Sock it to 'em, Department of Law.

Bumpy rails

A FEW DAYS ago in these columns we took note of the opening of the new Las Vegas monorail, providing service between the big casino hotels along the famous Strip, the city's main gambling mecca.

In Seattle, however, plans to extend its existing downtown monorail service by another 14 miles are in trouble. Every-thing was on track, so to speak, until a group calling itself Monorail Recall began collecting signatures to put on the November ballot a proposition that would junk the project.

King County Elections, which runs balloting in Seattle, certified that the opponents had gathered the required 17,229 signatures required to put Initiative 85 on the ballot. Later, another 7,309 signatures were turned in — providing more than twice as many signatures as legally required.

On the other hand, the Seattle Monorail Project, a group backing the plan, says it will take the matter to court. One argument is that the city-issued permits to build the monorail are land-use decisions that cannot be overturned by an initiative.

The project, approved by voters two years ago by a slender 677-vote margin, calls for construction of a \$1.75 billion monorail extension that would link Ballard, Seattle Center, downtown and West Seattle.

Stay tuned on this one.

Dog gets Kerry election worries

By TOM BRENNAN

My dog the Democrat is worried about his candidate. He thinks John Kerry is overdoing the bit where he plays the noncommittal of John F. Kennedy.

I tell him that he's too cynical. But he says it's spooky that Kerry and Kennedy both have the same initials, similar New England backgrounds and lots of money. And in Vietnam, Kerry commanded a swift boat that you could call PT 109.1 because its operations were so similar to the Kennedy torpedo boat.

Kerry rescued an overboarded Green Beret by hauling him aboard by his pants, a lot like Jack did in dragging his injured crewman to a South Pacific island. And Kerry likes to throw a football around on campaign trips, just like Kennedy and his clan did.

But there are differences. For one thing, Teresa Heinz Kerry is no Jacqueline Kennedy. Jackie invited the mostly crooked Rat Pack to the White House but Teresa is more of a Johnny Paycheck kind of gal. Paycheck is best known for his song "Take This Job and Shine It."



And Teresa doesn't **Brennan** trust Ted Kennedy, at least she said she didn't in the days when she was a Republican.

My dog Jack (the name is just a coincidence) is also tired of hearing Al Gore moan about how close he came to winning the 2000 election. He remembers the canines map that USA Today produced showing how much of the country each candidate won.

The Gore counties were colored blue and the Bush counties were in red. The map was almost entirely red and showed clearly that Bush swept the vast land area of the nation. Gore got the big cities. Gore's strong areas were cities with multimillion populations, places like the Northeast, portions of the industrial rust belt and the Left Coast of California. In fact, even in California most of the land area away from the liberal nests along the shore was Bush red.



Bush counties in 2000 contained 24 million square miles of land and Gore counties had 675,000 square miles. Those totals do not include Alaska, which went for Bush and by itself contains 568,000 square miles, more than Gore won in all the rest of the country.

And I'm not talking empty acreage with no people in it. Bush counties in the Lower 48 had 149 million people versus just 127 million people in Gore counties. My dog says he doesn't want to hear any more about hanging chads in Florida either. He says Gore got his butt kicked by Bush that year and it's time for Al to put away the crying towel.

My dog also thinks Bill Clinton should stop bragging about how strong the economy got when he was president. Actually Clinton had nothing to do with the economic growth during those eight years.

All Clinton did was stay out of the economy's way. That is one of the best things a president can do to help, though there are plenty of ways the White House can screw things up. Fortunately President Bill was too busy with other things — like fooling with Monica Lewinsky and fighting off impeachment — and he didn't get around to doing them.

Clinton got impeached by the House for lying to a grand jury investigating the Paula Jones sexual harassment charges and the Monica Lewinsky affair and for trying to obstruct justice in the Paula Jones case. Democrats in the Senate

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior editor

Wednesday, July 28, 2004 **B-7**

LET'S PUT BLAME WHERE...

Blame belongs

LET'S SEE if we have this straight. Many critics of President George W. Bush blame him because the nation was not prepared to fend off the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

But Bush was inaugurated on Jan. 20 of that year, less than nine months before Islamic extremists hijacked airliners and flew them into New York's World Trade Center, the Pentagon and — in the one case where passengers fought back — an empty field in Pennsylvania.

Bush took over the presidency from the man who held the job for the previous eight years, Bill Clinton.

In a president's first year he must take charge quickly and run the country, but in fact he is largely learning the ropes, trying to determine the system's strengths and weaknesses, and making a start at changes where problems are identified. Putting the nation on a better course can take years.

If any single president deserves blame for the 9/11 disaster, that dubious honor should probably fall to the man who held the job for the previous two full terms. But it's actually unclear how much blame should fall to Clinton, either. The failures that enabled the massacre of 3,123 people in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania were systemic failures whose origins probably date back years and went uncorrected by anybody.

The 9/11 commission report, said both Clinton and Bush were well aware of the al Qaeda threat and attempted to deal with it, with limited success. The intelligence network and government structure they inherited was poorly equipped to deal with terrorists so motivated, carefully trained and prepared.

But if President Bush does not deserve blame for the letting the attacks happen, he does deserve credit for his response — launching substantive counter-attacks against terrorists and developing a wide-ranging homeland security program. Let's give credit — and blame — where they are due.

By the boatload

IT WILL BE a while, of course, before the actual numbers are in. But from the looks of things right now, we'd guess that this summer's tourist season is turning out to be one of the best.

Downtown — morning, noon and night — is alive with visitors. The sidewalks are crowded. Restaurants are doing a bustling business. Shops and stores are getting a lot of traffic. Street vendors are selling hot dogs and T-shirts. The city's all abuzz.

Good. We're glad to have people come to our state and our town. It's fun to share something of Alaska with them. Summer in Alaska is always terrific. The tourists just help to make it all the better.

Pet owners should train or restrain

BY ELISE PATKOLAK

I'm what you'd call animal friendly. Or, as my accountant puts it every year when he looks at my charitable deductions, "I ain't there any people that you want to help."

My animals are my family. They are my companions. My dear friends and aren't they? They aren't human. Even I know that.

This means that if someone is going to be in charge, it should usually be me if only because I'm the only one with the opposable thumb needed to dial 911 in an emergency. It also means that I am responsible for their behavior because I am the one requiring that they live in human society according to human rules.

And on those occasions when I know they are apt to forget the rules, I need to take extra precautions to make sure they are still under my control.

So when I take my dog out for his daily constitutional, he is always on a leash. This is because I know that as much as he wants to please me (allow me my fantasy here), he gets distracted when the wind blows some cock or he hears some other dog had the nerve to mark over his territory since yesterday.



Patkolak

When distracted, he doesn't hear me no matter how loud I yell. He doesn't see me despite my sizeable grin and the fact that I am jumping up and down while running after him waving my arms. He is unaware of my existence because something vital has caught his eye and he is required by some arcane law of dogdom to follow whatever it is to its logical conclusion. What is most often another clump of weeds needing to be marked.

As I hike around my neighborhood each day, I've come to encounter both the best and the worse of dog owners. The best is exemplified by the dog that sits in a yard near a curve at the top of a hill I pass each day. The dog seems to be



one of those hyper Australian varieties that is happy only when engaged in herding the earth in a misguided attempt to ensure that it does not spin out of orbit. This dog had been clearly trained to know his property and to stay on it no matter what. At first I suspected a hidden fence but I was disabused of this notion the day the dog ran down the driveway as I went by and actually came out into the road. I wish I had a picture of that dog's face as he realized he was off property. It can only be described as horrified.

He turned tail and ran back up the driveway, turned around, sat down facing me and assumed an expression that clearly said, "I choose to believe that I've been here the whole time and I don't care what you say."

Each day this dog runs down the hill with me while staying on his property. When he gets to the end of his part of the run, he sticks his head out of the trees and barks once as if to say goodbye. This is a dog that someone has taken the trouble to teach and leash well. Further down that same road are three dogs that are the epitome of every-dog-wrong with training dogs. They are loose on their property, there is no fence and they have not been taught to stay on their land. So every day as I go by on my hike with my dog leashed and tending by my side, I am suddenly ac-

costed by three dogs racing down a driveway, barking like crazy and heading for my little Schauzer.

Now maybe these dogs are friendly at home. But when three dogs that live together encounter another dog and have no human supervision, they become a pack. And so I end up leaping off my bike, scooping up my dog and standing there screaming at the three dogs to go home till their owner inside the house bothers to lope down the driveway and call them.

That is not the way good owners take care of their dogs. And that jilt of adrenaline I feel every time I see these dogs bounding down the driveway is not the exercise I was really planning to have. Since I can't change my route without taking my dog into a more heavily trafficked street, I guess I'm stuck with this situation.

But I do wish that people who owned dogs, especially three dogs, would take the little extra time needed to either train them or restrain them. It would make the world more pleasant for everybody.

Elise Patkolak, an Anchorage free-lance writer and author of *Paradise Logic*, a humorous look back at her 28 years in Barrow, lives in Anchorage and owns *Presidents Campo Ltd.*, a writing/graphics company.

The Anchorage Times

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Staff Editor

Tuesday, July 27, 2004 **B-5**

9/11 REPORT FITTISTS:

We are at war

IN THE WAKE of the publication of the long-awaited 9/11 report, it is worth repeating again what we have said over and over again in these columns: the United States is at war.

It is not a war we sought. It is not a war that will be easily waged. But it is a war that will test the American will to survive. And it is a war that the U.S. cannot afford to lose.

The report by the 9/11 Commission — formally known as the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States — comes as an after-the-fact probe into the terrible destruction at the World Trade Center in New York, at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and the deaths that came that day in a field in western Pennsylvania.

The deaths came as the result of acts of war — not war in the traditional sense, but of a new kind of war waged by religious fanatics who around their faces in masks and direct their venom largely against non-combatants and innocent civilians. This is a war that began not on 9/11, but rather in 1986 with a series of attacks against American installations abroad and against diplomats, civilians sailors, and Marines.

IN RESPONSE, the U.S. finally answered — toppling Saddam Hussein in Iraq, pursuing Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan, and seeking out terrorists in the Middle East, the Philippines and elsewhere in the world.

The battle has shifted to car bombs in Iraq and kidnappings by religious Islamic zealots targeting civilian workers from countries supporting the effort to rebuild Iraq. The goal, plainly stated, is to destroy the U.S. and all of Western civilization. In response to the deadly sort of blackmail, Spain and the government of the Philippines already have caved in. The terrorist goal is to make the world cower before them — weakly calling for compromise and negotiations.

The truth is that there is no way to negotiate with those who bring terror to the world. Compromise is not part of their battle plan. Murder is — the murder of anyone who stands in their way.

We cannot stop fighting this war, because the terrorists will not stop. There are only two choices. We can fight back — absolutely with preemptive strikes — or we can surrender.

Surrender will mean the loss of everything the U.S. stands for — our freedoms, our liberty, our way of life.

The 9/11 Commission performed a useful purpose. One of its great lessons is that hindsight won't win against those who seek our destruction through terrorist attacks. What can win is a brave commitment and a suffering national will to fight a long war, in which victory will not be easy, but which must be gained.

Invading Iraq was better than Iran

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

Did we invade the wrong country? One of the lessons being drawn from the Sept. 11 report is that Iran was the real threat. It had links to al Qaeda, allowed some of the Sept. 11 hijackers to transit, and is today harboring al Qaeda leaders. The Iraq war critics have a new line of attack. We should have done Iran instead of Iraq.

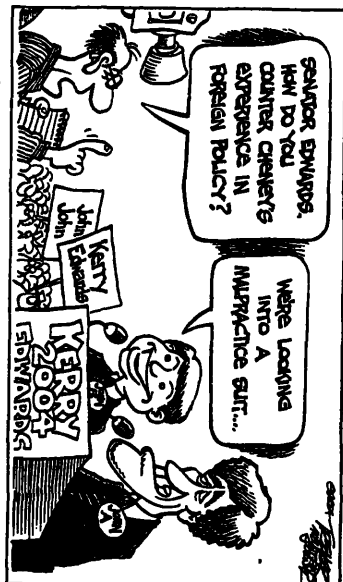
Well, of course Iran is a threat, and a danger. But how exactly would the critics have "done" Iran? Iran is a serious country with a serious army. Compared with the Iraq war, an invasion of Iran would have been infinitely more costly. Can you imagine those critics, who were denouncing "unintelligence" and "defeat" when the low-level guerrilla war in Iraq intensified in April, actually supporting war with Iran?

If not war, then what? We know the central foreign policy principle of Bush critics: multilateralism. John Kerry and the Democrats have said it a hundred times. The source of our troubles is President Bush's insistence on "going it alone." They promise to "rejoin the community of nations" and "work with our allies."

Well, that happens to be exactly what we have been doing regarding Iran. And the policy is an abject failure. The Bush administration, having decided that invading one axis-of-evil country was about as much as either the military or the country can bear, has gone multilateral on Iran, precisely what the Democrats advocate. Washington designated the issue to a committee of three — the foreign ministers of Britain, France and Germany — that has been meeting with the Iranians to get them to shut down their nuclear program.

The result? They have been led by the nose. Iran is caught red-handed with illegally enriched uranium, and the Tehran Three prevail upon the Bush administration to do nothing while they persuade the multilateral to act. Therefore, we do not go to the UN Security Council to demand Iran in violation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We do not impose sanctions. We do not begin squeezing Iran to give up its nuclear program.

Indeed, we give Iran more time to work before the persuasive powers of "check of Tehran" — British Foreign Sec-



etary, Jack Straw — until finally, but multilaterally, Iran announces that it will resume enriching uranium and that nothing will prevent it from becoming a member of the "nuclear club."

The result has not been harmless. Time is of the essence, and the turnaround that the Tehran Three have gotten from the multilateral has meant that we have lost at least nine months in doing anything to stop the Iranian nuclear program.

The fact is that the war critics have nothing to offer on the single most urgent issue of our time — regime stability in pursuit of weapons of mass destruction. Iran instead of Iraq? The Iraq critics would have done nothing about either country. There would today be two major Islamic countries sitting on an ocean of oil, supporting terrorism and seeking weapons of mass destruction — instead of one.

Two years ago there were five countries supporting terrorism and pursuing these weapons — two junior-league, Libya and Syria, and the axis-of-evil variety, Iraq, Iran and North Korea. The Bush administration has eliminated two Iraq, by direct military means, and Libya, by example and intimidation.

Syria is weak and deterred by Israel. North Korea, having gone nuclear, is untouchable. That leaves Iran. What to do? There are only two things that will stop the Iranian nuclear program, reduction from below or an attack on its nuclear facilities.

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WILLIAM J. TORIN
Senior Editor

Monday, July 26, 2004 B-5

STUDENT ATHLETES . . .

An oxymoron?

THE POLITICAL season is not limited to campaigns for public office. This season, more political games are being played on college campuses — involving what too often are laughingly described as student athletes.

In too many high-profile universities, where football and basketball are big-time revenue generators, the “student” part of the athletic equation is often downplayed. Money for the schools and money for the star players are major concerns.

Changes are in the works, and not necessarily for the better — at least from one perspective.

The National Association of Basketball Coaches has unanimously approved a proposal that would give college basketball players a fifth season of eligibility. Myles Brand, NCAA president and a former president of Indiana University, has enthusiastically endorsed the idea — which is not expected to be implemented for another year.

In Brand's view, adding a fifth year of eligibility will “increase graduation rates in men's basketball, which has had the most severe problem.”

Good grief. The presumption apparently is that basketball players aren't smart enough to complete their graduation requirements in four years, and thus need more time to do so — and, in the process, get another year of playing time.

It's all backwards to us.

THE NCAA instead should be reducing eligibility to three years, and go back to its former days when freshman athletes — if you'll forgive the expression — had one year of college to become acclimated to university life and the pressures of higher level academic expectations before devoting themselves to big-time basketball, football or other intercollegiate sports.

As it is now, all too many college stars already drop out of school before graduation — lured by offers of multimillion-dollar professional contracts. One freshman season is enough to attract some to the pro ranks. Many more quit college after their sophomore and junior years.

What good will a fifth year of eligibility do for graduation rates, under these circumstances?

Sadly, NCAA basketball — as played by the top conference Division I schools — already is all too much of a minor league farm system for the Seattle Super Sonics and the Los Angeles Lakers of the world.

The NCAA should be working to return the college game to the players — and to make certain the players, at least for their freshman years are students first, and athletes second.

Here's what free health care gets you

By WALTER E. WILLIAMS

Let's start out by not quibbling with America's socialists' false claim that health-care service is a human right that people should have regardless of whether they can pay for it or not, and that it should be free. Before we buy into this socialist agenda, we might check out just what happens when health-care services are “free.” Let's look at our neighbor to the north — Canada.

The Fraser Institute, a Vancouver, B.C.-based think tank, has done year-after-year work keeping track of Canada's so-called health-care system. It has just come out with its 13th annual waiting-list survey. It shows that the average time a patient waited between referral from a general practitioner to treatment rose from 16.5 weeks in 2001-02 to 17.7 weeks in 2003. Saskatchewan had the longest average waiting time of nearly 30 weeks, while Ontario had the shortest, 14 weeks.

Waiting lists also exist for diagnostic procedures such as

computer tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and ultrasound. Depending on what province and the particular diagnostic procedure, the waiting times can range from two to 24 weeks.

Williams

As reported in a December 2003 story by Kern Houston for the *Frontiers of Freedom Institute* titled “Access Denied: Canada's Health-care System Turns Patients Into Victims,” in some instances, patients die on the waiting list because they become too sick to tolerate a procedure.

Houston says that hip-replacement patients often end up non-ambulatory while waiting an average of 20 weeks for the procedure, and that's after having waited 13 weeks just to see the specialist. The wait to get diagnostic scans followed by the wait for the radiologist to read them just might explain why Cleveland, Ohio, has become Canada's hip-replacement center.

Adding to Canada's medical prob-

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lems is the exodus of doctors. According to a March 2003 story in *Canada News* (www.canoe.ca), about 10,000 doctors left Canada during the 1990s, compounding the exodus of doctors is the drop in medical school graduates.

According to Houston, Ontario has chosen to turn to nurses to replace its boiling doctors. It's “creating” 369 new positions for nurse practitioners to take up the slack for the doctor shortage.

Some patients avoided long waits for medical services by paying for private treatment. In 2003, the government of British Columbia enacted Bill 82, an “Amendment to Strengthen Legislation and Protect Patients.” On its face, Bill 82 is to “protect patients from negligent billing errors.” That's on its face.

But according to a January 2004 article written by Kathleen Samml for the Fraser Institute's *Forum* and titled “Oh to Be a Prisoner,” Bill 82 would disallow anyone from paying the clinical fees for private surgery, where previously only the patients themselves were forbidden from doing so.

The bill also gives the government the power to levy fines of up to \$20,000 on physicians who accept these fees or allow such a practice to occur. That

means it is now against Canadian law to opt out of the Canadian health-care system and pay for your own surgery. Health care can have a zero price to the user, but that doesn't mean it's free or has a zero cost. The problem with a good or service having a zero price is that demand is going to exceed supply. When price isn't allowed to make demand equal supply, other measures must be taken.

One way to distribute the demand over a given supply is through queuing — making people wait. Another way is to have a medical czar who decides who is eligible, under what conditions, for a particular procedure — for example, no hip replacement or renal dialysis for people over 70 or no heart transplants for smokers.

I'm wondering just how many Americans would like Canada's long waiting lists, medical care deciding what treatments we get and an exodus of doctors.

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The Anchorage Times

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BILL J. ALLEN
Publisher

Voice of the Times

A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Sunday, July 25, 2004 F-3

TONY'S GUY, KERRY, SAYS IT AGAIN . . .

No ANWR

SEN. JOHN KERRY, who is about to be crowned as the Democratic presidential nominee, has put it plainly once more. As president, he will not allow any oil and gas exploration and development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

None. Nada. No way. Not even, obviously, if Tony Knowles should be elected to the Senate from Alaska.

Tough luck, Tony. Kerry made his position clear in a two-page fund-raising letter that must have been sent all over the country to voters everywhere — even to one of our editors, who received it this past Monday.

In many ways, it was a remarkable letter — mean spirited, belligerent and downright ugly in the way Kerry spoke of the man he hopes to replace in the White House. Get this:

"Please join me today in sending a powerful message all across America. George W. Bush's days are numbered."

Not a very pleasant way to speak of the president of the United States in these days when terrorism is on everybody's mind.

"And we will put an end to a Bush administration obsessed with lavishing tax breaks on the wealthiest Americans and doing the bidding of powerful special interests," the letter proclaimed.

GIVE US A break. A tax break, in fact, is just dandy, and thanks to President Bush for that. But when it comes to special interests, Kerry apparently had no space left in his letter to mention a few of his own: labor unions, leadership unions, trial lawyers, environmentalists.

As to the greens (sorry about that, Tony), Kerry said right there on Page One of his letter:

"Together, we'll protect our environment from those who would despoil America's most precious places like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge." Oh, dear.

Has anybody around here heard another soul planning to despoil ANWR? Any Alaskans you know who want to do that? Any other American you've ever heard of who wants to despoil Alaska's icy coast?

John Kerry apparently thinks a lot of people do. Or will unless he is elected president.

Quite obviously, too, Kerry isn't listening to his Democratic candidate for the U.S. Senate from Alaska. Tony thinks opening the coastal plain of ANWR would be a good idea.

But if Tony defeats Sen. Lisa Murkowski in November, and upsets the current Republican majority in the Senate, Kerry's Democrats will be in full control — against ANWR and everything else. Lisa, Sen. Ted Stevens and Rep. Don Young stand for

Alaskans don't need John Kerry. Or Tony Knowles, for that matter.

Whittier should be conventions' site

The 2004 Democratic National Convention opens tomorrow in Boston, as godly a place as ever could be chosen for party faithful to meet to nominate Sen. John Kerry as their choice for president.

The same can be said for the Republican party, which will gather in New York City beginning Aug. 30 to renominate George W. Bush for the coming November general election battle. Nothing has changed much, in other words, since 36 years ago, when Hubert H. Humphrey was the choice of the Democratic and Republican nominees in Chicago and the Republicans met in Miami Beach and nominated Richard M. Nixon as the GOP presidential nominee.

A better place for both conventions — then and now — was pointed out in the following Saturday, Sunday column which appeared in *The Anchorage Times* on Aug. 3, 1968. That column is reprinted here today — just for the fun of it.

By WILLIAM J. TOBIN

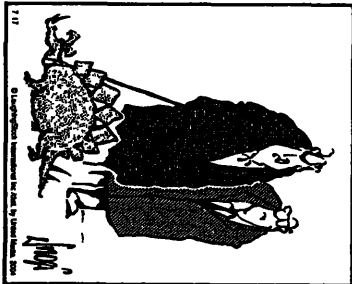
THE TROUBLE with the Republican National Convention is that it is being held in the wrong place. So is the Democratic National Convention, for that matter.

NOBODY IN his right mind wants to go to Miami Beach in August. And nobody Tobin wants to go to Chicago, ever.

Both are off-season disaster areas, high on humidity and low on comfort.

THE ONLY thing good you can say about Miami Beach in August is that most of the hurricane season has passed. But at convention time, the delegates still will have to endure blasts of hot air from a whole series of stem-winding speeches, such cluttered with bulky bundles of "the man WHO."

CHICAGO IS worse. The Edgewater Beach Hotel has closed, the mayor says his politician's guns are loaded, the lakefront has been turned into a collection site for dead fish, and the



"Old hat has been in the family for as far back as I can remember."

Thank you from the Gary steel mill workers' visibility to half a block.

THERE IS ONE advantage to both Miami Beach and Chicago, however. The crowds may not be as great as expected. Half of the convention-bound delegates to Miami Beach may wind up in Havana, and goodly gobs of Democrats flying into Chicago may be delayed for so long over O'Hare International Airport by aerial traffic jams that the sessions may be over before they land.

BUT IT IS unfair to criticize the wisdom of party leaders who made these abominable site selections, unless a proper alternative can be proposed. It is far too late for this year, of course, to rectify the mess the GOP and the Democrats have made of things for 1968. But 1972 is just around the corner — and salvation is at hand.

THE NEXT CONVENTIONS, friends, must be held at Whittier. Is there a more natural spot in the world? Of course not. The proposal is so logical that it is hard to believe it has not been made before.

JUST CONSIDER a few facts. There has never been a race riot in Whittier. There has never been a tele-

phone strike. There has never been overcrowding. Prices have remained constant. The tourist is never racked by an increase in the price of food, theater tickets, excursions fares and the like. Sand fleas don't abound on the beach. As a matter of fact, the beaches are never jammed with swimmers — there's room for everybody.

MORE THAN THAT, the scenery there is natural. Rows and rows of skyscrapers and garish hotels don't block the view. And you can breathe the air as clean and clear — no smog, no steaming humidity.

COMMUNICATIONS are no problem — or at least won't be by 1972. By then, our congressional delegation — working hand-in-hand with the Communication Satellite Corp. — will have the television piped to all corners of the state.

IN FACT, THE TV arrangements are the biggest thing of all in favor of Whittier as the site for both national conventions. Because of the time element, the late-night nominating speeches, scheduled spontaneous demonstrations and all the hoopla will be seen live at breakfast time in the other states. There will be no need to pre-empt the regular evening schedule of TV shows of real importance, like *Peterson Junction*, the *Average* and various other re-runs that now fill primetime in August.

THE NETWORKS should love that. So should the sponsors. And so should the little old lady in Kodiak who doesn't give a hoot about "the man WHO" speeches, but who would raise Cain if Love of Life is pushed off the channel for some political foolishness.

IF THIS HAPPENS, the Hodge Building and the Buckner Building finally will come into their own. It's a natural for the Republican, too — using those white elephants at last. And just by shipping a few donkeys down the railroad, real impartiality could be shown — and we'll have the conventions sewed up for '72.

William J. Tobin is an editor of *The Anchorage Times*.

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A CONSERVATIVE VOICE FOR ALASKANS

WILLIAM J. TOBIN
Senior Editor

Saturday, July 24, 2004 **B-5**

STOCKING STUFFERS...

Berger at work

IT SOUNDS JUST like old times, back when Hillary I and Bill Clinton were leasing papers and documents needed to throw light on some of their shady activities in the Capital Building in Little Rock and in the White House in Washington, D.C.

Now Sandy Berger, former President Clinton's national security adviser, is the one who is in the spotlight — under criminal investigation by the Justice Department after highly classified terrorism documents disappeared.

He was reviewing the documents, it's reported, to determine whether some should be turned over to the Sept. 11 commission.

Apparently he concluded some should not.

These he stuffed in his jacket, pants and socks and left the room — without realizing that security guards had seen what he was doing, and who reported that highly classified documents were missing.

"I deeply regret the sloppiness involved," Berger said in a statement.

Translation. He deeply regrets being caught.

Well, he learned from the Clintons — and was, until his "sloppiness" was disclosed, ready to pass his expertise along to John Kerry, the nominee-in-waiting for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Once nabbed, he resigned Tuesday as a Kerry national security adviser.

Aw, shucks. He's the kind of person Kerry needs.

Can-do spirit

GIVE LAS VEGAS some credit. It has become, in a sense, what Alaska used to be.

A few days ago it began serving on a \$650 million monorail that runs between six casinos along the Strip — the glittering, eye-popping rows of great hotels that line Las Vegas Boulevard. It's a 50-mile-an-hour ride, with space in four rail cars for 224 riders at a time. The fee: \$3 for a one-way trip, which will seem cheap when the desert temperatures climb above the 100-degree mark.

Next spring, ground will be broken to extend the track to the downtown district, and later to McCarran International Airport.

And this is what we like, from Bruce Woodbury, chairman of the Las Vegas regional transit commission.

"We're a community with a vision. We see something in our minds' eye, we make something happen, we go out and build it."

Thinking like Alaskans used to think.

Audience abandoning old-school media

By LEW M. WILLIAMS, JR.

Among Southeast Alaska's legitimate summer visitors are freshwater travelers on someone else's dollar, promising to produce an expose. Greenpeace is hosting Martha Dixon, a BBC-TV reporter all the way from England. Greenpeace, traveling on grants and donations (memberships) on its yacht, promised to show her Alaska Native protesting logging in Tongass National Forest. They will have to stage it.

She sought to interview Owen Graham of the Alaska Forest Association and Steve Selby, owner of Ketchikan's Pacific Log & Lumber mill, to get what she called the other side of the story. Each declined the interview because of past bad experiences with inaccurate reporters.

Graham provided her a list of five myths about the Tongass. The first was posted on the Greenpeace web page. He used Forest Service figures to debunk the myth. Selby's e-mail to Dixon gave her information that dispelled the myth that there is a giant industrial complex in the Tongass called by the Russian Bush.

NBC and the Christian Science Monitor had reporters briefly in Juneau, headquarters of environmental organizations. Todd Wilkerson, writing for the Monitor, visited logging sites on private land with green groups. He failed to talk with Forest Service officials.

In his article he called the Southeast Conference a "timber lobbying group." He used a brief interview with conference spokesman Rolly Pool to provide what he called balance in his article. He failed to recognize that the conference is not a timber organization. It is made up of elected representatives of 28 communities in Southeast, nine chambers of commerce, nine Native organizations, 18 non-profits and community organizations and nine transportation organizations. Half of its board of directors are elected local government officials.

NBC news producer Kasehana Arraras of Chicago was hosted in Juneau by



"Just cut off a dollar's worth."

environmental groups and then contacted the conference to get "the other side." When Pool suggested she go to Ketchikan for the timber industry side of the story, it was too much work. "If Pool would just stand in front of a steel building

I and help us, and the American public, from such irresponsible reporting. Another real example appeared Sunday, June 27, in the Kansas City (Mo.) Star. The newspaper's editor, advocating the lockdown of all roadless areas in the Tongass, claimed that "the federal government has lowered to the timber industry, allowing logging of more than 1 million acres." The Forest Service, the only agency that surveys the forest, says only 400,000 acres have been harvested since a timber reserve was designated a national forest in 1987.

When this writer began a newspaper career 58 years ago, we called Star-TYPE writers "Afghanistan Editorials." People in their circulation area knew nothing of Afghanistan, so it was safe to editorialize about that country. Those days are gone. Afghanistan is always in the news. There are readers in the Star's area who are from Afghanistan and from Alaska. Misinformation about either place causes readers to wonder about the accuracy of the total news product.

The day after the Star editorial appeared, the newspaper printed a column by Kathleen Parker of the Tribune Media Services. The media syndicate is owned jointly by the Tribune Company and Knight-Ridder. Tribune owns 26 TV sta-

tions and 13 newspapers including the Chicago Tribune and Los Angeles Times. Knight-Ridder owns the Star and 51 other newspapers. Major newspaper readership is down in the last 10 years by 5 percent while the nation's population is up 14 percent. Why?

Parker says of newspapers, "We're boring, predictable, stand and out of touch with the folks with the quarters. Why do people want to get their hands dirty reading stale stories (major Alaska logging has been gone for seven years) that fail to ring the chime of truth?"

New York Times daily circulation is down 3 percent in the past four years, the Washington Post down 4 percent. (The Anchorage Daily News circulation is down 26 percent in that time.) But the readership of the New York Post owned by Rupert Murdoch, whose Fox cable news is debasing other networks, is up a phenomenal 38 percent in four years. Newspapers are not dead, only their editors.

While the major old networks have been losing listeners and viewers, newcomer Fox has become dominant on cable. The ratings July 15 listed Bill O'Reilly of Fox as the most watched cable news program, with a 2.0 rating. O'Reilly also has a radio program on 460 stations. Second on cable is Hannity and Colmes at 1.6. Sean Hannity also is on more than 350 radio stations. Two more Fox programs rate more viewers than CNN's Larry King who comes in fifth at 1.1. Port Chris Matthews on MSNBC's Hardball is a poor 4 and CNBC's Don Miller is last at 1.

Conservative radio commentator Rush Limbaugh, who criticizes many major media stories, has an audience of more than 20 million a week, on more than 600 stations. In New York City, he rates a 4.8 while the liberal talk show, *Air America*, has dropped since its marginal 2.2 in April to 1.2 in June.

There is no endorsement of Fox, Limbaugh or Rupert Murdoch's newspaper. This confirms what Alaskans and media critics Parker know: there is something wrong with the old media and they don't care.

Lew Williams, Jr., is a retired publisher of the Ketchikan Daily News. His e-mail is lmw@worldnet.att.net.

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